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ABSTRACT

Feminist issues are discussed in 33 scholarly articles that cover the following areas: the body and its control, the family, growing up female, the working woman, institutions of social control, and historical and contemporary developments in feminism. Titles and authors include: "Sexual Terrorism" (Carole J. Sheffield); "The Rape Culture" (Dianne Herman); "Abortion: The Controversial Choice" (Nadean Bishop); "Sexual Harassment: The Link between Gender Stratification, Sexuality, and Women's Economic Status" (Susan Ehrlich Martin); "Women, Health, and Medicine" (Barbara Katz Rothman); "The Origin of the Family" (Kathleen Gough); "Power in Dating Relationships" (Letitia Anne Peplau); "Marital Relationships and Mental Health: the Psychic Costs of Inequality" (Janice M. Steil); "Motherhood: Contemporary Conflict for Women" (Michele Hoffnung); "Child Care" (Jill Norgren); "Sex-Role Socialization: A Focus on Women" (Lenore J. Weitzman); "Women and Higher Education; Sex Differentials in the Status of Students and Scholars" (Mary Frank Fox); "The Double Standard: Age" (Inge Powell Bell); "The Internalization of Powerlessness: A Case Study of the Displaced Homemaker" (Lois M. Greenwood-Audant); "Women and Widowhood: The Suffering beyond Grief" (Judith M. Stillion); "Women in the Labor Force: An Overview" (Francine D. Blau); "Clerical Work: The Female Occupation" (Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Roslyn L. Feldbert); "'Union is Power': Sketches from Women's Labor History" (Barbara M. Wertheimer); "Professional Women: How Real Are the Recent Gains?" (Debra Renee Kaufman); "Trust, Loyalty, and the Place of Women in the Informal Organization of Work" (Judith Lorber); "Women, Law, and Public Policy" (Jo Freeman); "Women and Politics: The Real Majority" (Naomi B. Lynn); "Race and Ethnicity in the Lives of Minority Women" (Elizabeth McTaggart Almquist); "What Price Independence? Social Reactions to Lesbians, Spinsters, Widows, and Nuns" (Rose Weitz); "The Sexual Politics of Interpersonal Behavior" (Nancy Henly, Jo Freeman); "Sexism and the English Language; The Linguistic Implications of Being a Woman" (Karen L. Adams, Norma C. Ware); "Poverty is a Woman's Problem" (Kathleen Shortridge); "Farewell to Alms: Women's Fare under Welfare" (Diana M. Pearce); "The Historical Background" (Viola Klein); "The First Feminists" (Judith Hole, Ellen Levine); "The Women's Liberation Movement; Its Origins, Structure, Activities, and Ideas" (Jo Freeman); "Feminist Consciousness and Black Women" (Pauline Terrelonge); and "Keep Us on the Pedestal: Women against Feminism in Twentieth-Century America" (Susan E. Marshall). (SW)

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WOMEN

A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Third Edition

Edited by Jo Freeman

Mayfield Publishing Company

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Third edition

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PREFACE

The first edition of this book was put together as a labor of love and published primarily as an act of faith. It had its genesis in 1968, at the first national conference of what was to become the younger branch of the women's liberation movement. Many of us at that conference had just begun reading everything we could find on women, and in that traditional era we were appalled at the scarcity of perceptive writings and only occasionally delighted by a gem that sparkled with new ideas. There were no books or anthologies presenting a feminist perspective on women's status, and those books about women that were not written from a wholly traditional view generally discounted feminism as outmoded, extreme, or both.

Ironically for a group that has since produced so much writing, most of us then felt unable to express our rising consciousness in words. Why not, we thought, do the next best thing? Why not bring together those few existing pieces that were worthwhile and save other women the task of seeking them out? That was a job I took on. Unfortunately, at the same time, I started working for my Ph.D. in political science. It took two years longer to publish the anthology than it did to get the degree.

During the years I worked on the book it grew and changed with the movement. Of the earliest selections, only two made it to the first edition, and only one of those to the third. The rest represented the new research of that time, the new thinking, and the new interpretations of old research inspired by the women's liberation movement.

The first edition articles came from a variety of sources. I placed ads in most of the burgeoning feminist media, and some organizations, notably the Women's History Research Library of Berkeley and KNOW of Pittsburgh, included special notices with their regular mailings. The response was overwhelming. Hundreds of articles and proposals poured in, and well over a year was spent reading and editing them.

From the beginning the standards were high. This book was to contain pieces that were comprehensive, lucidly written, and well grounded in scholarly research. Needless to say, the submissions I received in response to ads were not uniform in style and approach; nor did they cover all the topics needed. Hence I also collected movement pamphlets and other publications on women, attended feminist meetings, and audited panel discussions on women at professional meetings to find potential authors.

During this period both scholarly and popular writing on women was increasing exponentially, with feminist insights sparking analysis of the contradictions in women's lives in every conceivable sphere. Simultaneously, it was becoming harder and harder to interest a publisher in the book. Some who had expressed tentative interest when I first began sending out the prospectus decided as the book took shape that "this women's thing" was a fad and what market there was, was already glutted. Then one of my authors discussed the book with the traveling editor of a small house on the West Coast. That editor was Alden Paine. He wrote to me; I sent the manuscript; and after I agreed to decrease its length by one-third, National Press Books (soon to become Mayfield Publishing Company) sent me a contract.

As the book went to press, almost everything about it (except the quality of the articles) was an unknown. Owing to its size and recent name change, the publisher was unknown. I was an unknown. All but a few of the authors were unknowns. The potential readership was unknown. All publishing involves some risk, but this was extraordinary. Within two years we knew that love and faith had carried the day. Women's studies courses grew and spread, and both teachers and students found the volume an appropriate introductory text. The reason the courses spread, even in an atmosphere of skepticism and a period of declining college enrollments, is that feminism is not a fad, but a national consciousness that is fundamentally changing the fabric of all our lives.

The first edition took seven years to complete. The second and third editions took only about two and a half years each. Both required hard decisions about what to delete and what to add. Some decisions made themselves: Not all authors were available to update their contributions; a few articles no longer had the same impact as they had earlier; feedback from users of the text identified some articles that were not widely assigned in class. And, as much as possible, I wanted to replace reprints with original articles and to survey the current issues.

The third edition relied more on "advertising" for submissions than any previous edition, largely because I was a full-time law student and thus not circulating among feminist scholars. In the summer of 1981 I requested the newsletters of the Women's Caucus for Political Science, Sociologists for Women in Society, and the Association of Women Psychologists to publish an announcement of my search for papers, listing the primary topics for which I was looking. WCPS ran it in the fall; and while the responses were few, two submissions are in this volume. There were at least 200 responses to the SWS and AWP blurbs, but since those newsletters didn't run the announcements until the spring, and the deadline for manuscripts was August 1, 1982, that put a bit of a squeeze on the authors from whom articles were eventually commissioned, which is perhaps why only 60 percent of those articles made it into print.

The evolution of this book illustrates some of the developments in feminist scholarship and the networks within which it is promulgated that have developed in the last fifteen years. For example, feminist (nonacademic) media are much reduced; most of the sources I used for the first edition no longer exist. Women's or feminist caucuses now exist within or are associated with disciplinary associations and are the primary way of reaching those best able to write scholarly articles for an undergraduate audience. However, the fact that the SWS and AWP newsletters had hiatuses of six months or more between issues indicates that it is difficult to produce publications strictly through voluntary labor. On the other hand, the viability of the networks was evidenced by the fact that many local newsletters and publications picked up my announcement and ran it in subsequent months. I'm only sorry that my tight deadline prevented me from benefiting from the queries I received well into 1983.

The responses I received were highly varied. Some sent articles, published and unpublished; some sent letters. The primary reason I could use so few of the submissions was that they were too narrowly focused. I must have received at least ten articles on some aspect of achievement motivation in women and several on women in science, neither of which was a topic for which I was looking. While the specificity of people's projects made it difficult to get the broad-based articles appropriate to an introductory anthology, it showed that a great deal of progress has been made in feminist scholarship. Papers submitted for the first edition tended to be light on data and heavy on expression of personal feelings. Most tried to say a little bit about everything because women were so conscious of the interconnections between the various facets of their existence. Those for the second edition were well substantiated but still dealt with broad themes (thus it was the easiest of the three editions to do). Papers sent in for consideration for the third edition sometimes drowned in data and were too narrow for this particular book. Thus, in a fifteen-year period, feminist scholarship has moved from tentative exploration and mapping out of the intellectual territory, to initial data collection, theory creation, and analysis of broad themes, to more minute examination of specific topics within those themes. Along with this development there has been a lessening of personal involvement by the authors with their topics. For the first edition I edited out a lot of rhetoric and unsubstantiated speculation. The articles for the third edition were occasionally so dry I wished I could put some rhetoric in, and some authors stayed so close to their data that I had to encourage them to speculate more about what it might mean.

Not all of the current feminist scholarship is devoted to filling in the details of established frameworks. As the movement has grown and developed, new issues have come to light. Articles on such topics as sexual harassment and displaced homemakers reflect concerns that have arisen within the last few years. Furthermore, even within established topics, new events have occurred (such as in the case of abortion), new concerns have emerged (such as the feminization of poverty), and new research has been done. Consequently, only six articles from the second edition have been retained intact in the third. Almost half of the articles are new to this edition and the rest have been revised and updated.

As in previous editions, authors were encouraged to use the most recent data and to double-check it for accuracy. Often I checked it myself. During the editing of the second edition, I had an office in the Department of Labor in Washington and verified or changed everyone's governmental statistics. I couldn't do that this time except when I had reason to believe something wasn't quite right or quite recent enough and could find a federal government source to check it out for me. Imelda Smallwood and Howard Hayghe were particularly helpful in this endeavor. (Budget cuts have significantly cut down on the quantity of data available and the speed with which the government supplies data. I had expected preliminary results from the 1980 census to be ready for this edition, but they weren't.) During the editing of this edition, I had access to a law library and checked everyone's legal citations. Not everyone was thrilled at my insistence that secondary sources for legal references could not be used. One of these editions I'll have time to check everything.

The book that emerged from this effort contains not only an enormous amount of painstaking research and original thinking but some information that cannot easily be found anywhere else. The reader will find this a useful reference book as well as a general text. What can't be found in the articles can probably be found in sources cited in the footnotes. But while accuracy, thoroughness, and the use of the most recent data are stressed throughout, the true strength of the book rests not in its facts but in its ideas, and in the comprehensive orientation provided by a feminist perspective.

INTRODUCTION

The feminist perspective can best be understood in contrast to the traditional view, for each arises from a dramatically different set of premises. The traditionalist view looks at the many ways in which women differ from men and concludes that these differences reflect some basic intrinsic difference that far transcends reproductive capacities. The traditionalist notes that historically women have always had less power, less influence, and fewer resources than men, and assumes this must accord with some natural order. The feminist perspective looks at the many similarities between the sexes and concludes that women and men have equal potential for individual development. Differences in the realization of that potential, therefore, must result from externally imposed restraints, from the influence of social institutions and values. The feminist view holds that so long as society prescribes sex roles and social penalties for those who deviate from them, no meaningful choice exists for members of either sex. Such roles and restraints are incisively examined and challenged in this book, in the belief that only by first understanding their origins and manifestations can we gain the wisdom to dismantle them and create a more just society.

The organization of the book allows readers to begin by looking at their own lives, then moves out in widening circles to bring in the social and historical context of women's present-day status. The book concludes with a section on feminism as the historical and contemporary challenge to that status. Nonetheless, owing to the scope of many of the pieces and the very nature of their topics, the global and the personal are often combined.

In Part One, Carole J. Sheffield provides an overview of the different ways in which a woman's body is controlled and, through it, women as a group. Beginning with Lucy Stone's admonition that a woman's right to herself is the most fundamental one of all, Sheffield argues that such practices as rape, wife assault, the sexual abuse of children, and sexual harassment form a system of *sexual terrorism* "by which males frighten, and by frightening, control and dominate females." Nonetheless, women are perceived as perpetrators rather than as victims of this system because, as Dianne Herman argues, we live in a "rape culture" in which women are held responsible for the sex act even when it is against their will. Susan Ehrlich Martin shows that this is also true of sexual harassment, which has never been a crime and only recently has been held to be a form of illegal sex discrimination. Nadean Bishop chronicles the twists and turns in the abortion controversy, and Barbara Katz Rothman points out how both reproductive and mothering functions have been co-opted by the medical establishment. Together these authors illuminate how something as personal as a woman's body has been used and misused for political purposes.

The family has been the primary social institution to inform women's lives, and the patriarchal family has been perhaps the single most pervasive and effective means of confining and controlling women's achievements. In Part Two, Kathleen Gough puts the family in a historical and anthropological context, arguing that it is a fundamental achievement of the human species, but not an immutable one; indeed the sexual division of labor on which it is based is anachronistic. The other contributions to this section look at the different phases of the family. Letitia Anne Peplau shows how power is wielded in the mating game called dating; Janice M. Steil argues that the inequity in marital relationships has psychic as well as tangible costs for women; Michele Hoffnung explores the contradictions of the motherhood mystique and the conflict it creates with other important aspects of women's lives. Jill Norgren concludes this section by analyzing why the United States is the sole industrial nation for which child care is primarily a private responsibility.

It is through socialization and education that women are steered away from participating in the major social and economic institutions of our society. In Part Three, Lenore J. Weitzman contributes a major tour de force of the socialization literature with her own interpretation of how and why women emerge from this process in the way they do. Lois M. Greenwood-Audant argues that this socialization creates, along with the financial dependence and the norms and values resulting from working primarily in the home, a sense of powerlessness in housewives that incapacitates them when they become displaced homemakers. Mary Frank Fox looks at higher education, which has opened many opportunities for women but still does not treat them as the equals of men. Inge Powell Bell examines the consequences for older women of accepting the social norms of the female life cycle; Judith M. Stillion focuses on the problems of widowhood, which is both more likely and more lengthy for women than for men.

In Part Four, the economic consequences of society's channeling are clearly delineated by Francine D. Blau, who points out that there are two distinct labor markets—one male and one female—and the female market is economically depressed. Woman's share in the total income earned in this country, by and large, is not proportionate to her productive contribution. Evelyn Nakano Glenn and Roslyn L. Feldberg focus on clerical work to show how increased employment of women in clerical occupations has led to decreased benefits. It is clear that income is more directly related to the sex of the employee than to the requirements of the job. Barbara M. Wertheimer delves into labor history to document women's valiant, but often unwelcome, contribution to the labor movement. Debra Renee Kaufman profiles the professions and how they are structured around the typical male lifestyle, while Judith Lorber looks at some of the noneconomic reasons why women are excluded from male domains in the work world.

More overt institutions of social control are analyzed in Part Five. Jo Freeman looks at the history of women's constitutional rights and public policy on women, which were significantly increased after the emergence of the women's liberation movement. Naomi B. Lynn documents women's gains in the political sphere. Elizabeth McTaggart Almquist examines eight minority groups to show how ethnicity and sex interact in shaping the everyday lives of women. Rose Weitz calculates the price of independence by looking at the fate of women who would live without men: spinsters, widows, nuns, and particularly lesbians. More subtle spheres of control are charted by two complementary pieces, one by Nancy Henley and Jo Freeman on nonverbal communication and the other by Karen L. Adams and Norma C. Ware on language; both reveal the pervasiveness of sexism in interpersonal dealings, as well as the ways in which everyday conversation constantly reinforces prescribed sex-role behaviors in our society. Less subtle spheres of control are described by two other complementary pieces that address the increasing impoverishment of women. Kathleen Shortridge asks who the female poor are and why they are in poverty. Diana M. Pearce examines why welfare has not only failed to eliminate women's poverty but is locking women into it.

The last section, Part Six, is devoted to feminism past and present, a subject well worth a book in itself. Although Viola Klein's historical treatment is primarily concerned with events in England, the patterns of development of oppression and of dawning feminist awareness there were similar to those in the United States, and hers is still the best succinct analysis to date. Judith Hole and Ellen Levine detail accomplishments of the first feminist wave in the United States; Jo Freeman does the same for the current wave. Pauline Terrelonge advocates the relevance of feminism for black women and identifies barriers to its active acceptance. Finally, Susan E. Marshall looks at the rhetoric of the anti-feminist backlash to both the suffrage and the women's liberation movements.

The articles in this book are not merely a critique of society; implicitly, they take to task the scholarly disciplines whose research and concepts they draw upon. These disciplines, like the institutions and agencies of society at large, are dominated by those on the inside. They still reflect, to a great degree, the traditionalist point of view, and with it a desire to explain, justify, and maintain the status quo of human and institutional relationships. The result is too often a consistency of approach that is almost stifling. It may be politically convenient to view the world through the most comfortable lenses, but the resulting distortion is scientifically unacceptable. Only when one changes position, views the world from another stance, and relaxes one's claim to a monopoly on truth can new knowledge be gained.

The papers in this book show how feminist thought can contribute to this process by providing a new perspective from which to reexamine basic concepts in many spheres of learning. They not only point out the sexist prejudices of old research but show how new human opportunities can be created by changing outworn institutions and values. A feminist perspective is practical as well as theoretical; it illuminates possibilities for the future as well as criticizes the limitations of the present.

Yet these new ideas can have real meaning only within the context of a political movement organized to put them into practice. They will not be adopted merely because they appear in print. For proof of this fact, we need only look at what happened during and after the last feminist movement. We are, after all, not the first scholars to challenge traditional attitudes toward women. Within the limits of the scholarly tools then available to them, our feminist forebears did this once before. One has only to visit the library of the National Women's Party in Washington or the Schlesinger Library in Cambridge, Massachusetts, or the library of the Fawcett Society in London to realize the magnitude of their work. And one has only to think about how this work was relegated to dusty shelves and ignored after the last wave of feminism ended to feel a certain amount of despair: Clearly new ideas are not espoused by society on the basis of merit alone.

Thus we are in the position of calling "new" what is in fact very old. The feminist ideas of today are "new" only in the sense that most people now alive have not been exposed to them until recently, and in the sense that the more advanced methodology of the scholarly disciplines can "renew" their significance. But if we are not to repeat history—if we are not to see our own volumes ultimately join those others on the dusty shelves—we cannot complacently assume that they will be readily embraced. Instead we must recognize the political context in which such ideas thrive, and we must work to maintain that context until they are thoroughly incorporated into the everyday frame of mind.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

JO FREEMAN is the author of *The Politics of Women's Liberation* (winner of a 1975 American Political Science Association prize as the Best Scholarly Work on Women and Politics) and the editor of *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies* (1983). She has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago (1973) and a J.D. from New York University School of Law (1982). Her articles on feminism, social movements, law, public policy, sex-role socialization, organizational theory, education, federal election law, and party politics have been published in *The Nation, Ms., Valparaiso Law Review, Trans-action, School Review, Liberal Education, American Journal of Sociology, Intellect, Political Science Quarterly, Acta Sociologica, Prospects, Pace Law Review* and numerous anthologies.

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FRANCINE D. BLAU is professor of economics and labor and industrial relations at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where her teaching includes courses on women in the labor market. She is a member of the editorial boards of *Social Science Quarterly* and of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* and is second vice president of the Midwest Economics Association. She is the author of *Equal Pay in the Office* (1977) and has contributed widely to professional journals and anthologies. Her published works include "Race and Sex Differences in the Quits of Young Workers," with Lawrence Kahn (*Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 1981); "Occupational Segregation by Sex: Trends and Prospects," with Wallace Hendricks (*Journal of Human Resources*, 1979); "Economists' Approaches to Sex Segregation in the Labor Market: An Appraisal," with Carol Jusenius (*Signs*, 1976); and "Sex Segregation of Workers by Enterprise in Clerical Occupations" (*Labor Market Segmentation*, 1975). She is currently working with Marianne Ferber on a textbook on women in the economy.

ROSLYN L. FELDBERG is a visiting scholar at the Murray Research Center at Radcliffe College, where she is completing work on a collaborative study of women clerical workers and doing historical research on images of employed women. She has taught sociology and women's studies in the Boston area for over ten years. As a member of the Women's Research Center of Boston, she has also studied single-parent families and has written about family life and divorced motherhood.

MARY FRANK FOX is a research scientist at the University of Michigan's Center for Research on Social Organization and is a visiting assistant professor in the department of sociology. Her research focuses on stratification processes in academia and sex stratification in organizations and occupations. She has published numerous scholarly articles in *Sociology of Education, Work and Occupations, Social Studies of Science, Contemporary Sociology, Journal of Higher Education*, and *Scholarly Publishing*. In addition, she is the co-author (with Sharlene

Hesse-Biber) of the book *Women at Work* (Mayfield, 1984), and she is the author and editor of the forthcoming collection *Productive Scholarship: Issues, Problems, and Solutions*. She is national chair of research and publications for Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS), national co-chair of the 1983 SWS program, and regional coordinator of SWS for the state of Michigan.

EVELYN NAKANO GLENN teaches sociology at Boston University. Her research focuses on issues of gender, race, and work. She has collaborated with Roslyn Feldberg on a study of clerical work in large bureaucratic organizations, under a National Institute of Mental Health grant, and she is finishing a book on Japanese-American women domestic workers. In addition, she is a member of the Inter-University Research Group, which is doing a historical analysis of the effects of race and gender oppression on women of color in the United States.

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LENORE J. WEITZMAN is currently a member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton (on leave from the department of sociology at Stanford University), where she is completing a book on the social and economic impact of no-fault divorce. She is interested in the effects of legal structures on intimate relationships and is the author of *The Marriage Contract: Spouses, Lovers and the Law* (1981); "The Economics of Divorce" (*UCLA Law Review*, 1981); "The Alimony Myth," with Ruth Dixon (*Family Law Quarterly*, 1980); "Child Custody Awards," with Ruth Dixon (1979); and "Legal Regulation of Marriage: Tradition and Change" (*California Law Review*, 1974). Lenore Weitzman was a founding member of Sociologists for Women in Society and served on the board of directors of NOW's Legal Defense and Education Fund. She has taught at Yale University, the University of California at Berkeley, and Stanford University. Her interest in sex-role socialization was stimulated by an article she co-authored with three of her Yale students entitled "Sex-Role Socialization in Picture Books for Preschool Children" (*American Journal of Sociology*, 1972) and resulted in the book *Sex-Role Socialization: A Focus on Women* (Mayfield, 1979). She continues to believe, however, that the topic is too complex and subtle to ever master.

BARBARA M. WERTHEIMER was an associate professor at the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, and director of the Institute for Education and Research on Women and Work. A long-time labor educator and the author and editor of many books and articles in this field and on the subject of women's role in the work force, she died in 1983. Her books include *We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America* (1977), *Women as Third-Party Negotiators* (coedited with Ann H. Nelson, 1978), and *Labor Education for Women Workers* (1980).

PART ONE

The Body and Its Control

CAROLE J. SHEFFIELD

Sexual terrorism

No two of us think alike about it, and yet it is clear to me, that question underlies the whole movement, and our little skirmishing for better laws, and the right to vote, will yet be swallowed up in the real question, viz: Has a woman a right to herself? It is very little to me to have the right to vote, to own property, etc., if I may not keep my body, and its uses, in my absolute right. Not one wife in a thousand can do that now.

Lucy Stone, in a letter to Antoinette Brown, July 11, 1855

The right of men to control the female body is a cornerstone of patriarchy. It is expressed by their efforts to control pregnancy and childbirth and to define female health care in general. Male opposition to abortion is rooted in opposition to female autonomy. Violence and the threat of violence against females represent the need of patriarchy to deny that a woman's body is her own property and that no one should have access to it without her consent. Violence and its corollary, fear, serve to terrorize females and to maintain the patriarchal definition of woman's place.

The word *terrorism* invokes images of furtive organizations of the far right or left, whose members blow up buildings and cars, hijack airplanes, and murder innocent people in some country other than ours. But there is a different kind of terrorism, one that so pervades our culture that we have learned to live with it as though it were the natural order of things. Its targets are females—of all ages, races, and classes. It is the common characteristic of rape, wife battery, incest, pornography, harassment, and all forms of sexual violence. I call it *sexual terrorism* because it is a system by which males frighten and, by frightening, control and dominate females.

The concept of terrorism captured my attention in an "ordinary" event. One afternoon I collected my laundry and went to a nearby laundromat. The place is located in a small shopping center on a very busy highway. After I had loaded and started the machines, I became acutely aware of my environment. It was just after 6:00 P.M. and dark; the other stores were closed; the laundromat was brightly lit;

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and my car was the only one in the lot. Anyone passing by could readily see that I was alone and isolated. Knowing that rape is a crime of opportunity, I became terrified. I wanted to leave and find a laundromat that was busier, but my clothes were well into the wash cycle, and, besides, I felt I was being "silly," "paranoid." The feeling of terror persisted, so I sat in my car, windows up, and doors locked. When the wash was completed, I dashed in, threw the clothes into the drier, and ran back out to my car. When the clothes were dry, I tossed them recklessly into the basket and hurriedly drove away to fold them in the security of my home.

Although I was not victimized in a direct, physical way or by objective or measurable standards, I felt victimized. It was, for me, a terrifying experience. I felt controlled by an invisible force. I was angry that something as commonplace as doing laundry after a day's work jeopardized my well-being. Mostly I was angry at being unfree: a hostage of a culture that, for the most part, encourages violence against females, instructs men in the methodology of sexual violence, and provides them with ready justification for their violence. I was angry that I could be victimized by being "in the wrong place at the wrong time." The essence of terrorism is that one never knows when is the wrong time and where is the wrong place.

Following my experience at the laundromat, I talked with my students about terrorization. Women students began to open up and reveal terrors that they had kept secret because of embarrassment: fears of jogging alone, dining alone, going to the movies alone. One woman recalled feelings of terror in her adolescence when she did child care for extra money. Nothing had ever happened and she had not been afraid of anyone in particular, but she had felt a vague terror when being driven home late at night by the man of the house.

The men listened incredulously and then demanded equal time. The harder they tried the more they realized how very different—qualitatively, quantitatively, and contextually—their fears were. All agreed that, while they experienced fear in a violent society, they did not experience terror; nor did they experience fear of rape or sexual mutilation. They felt more in control, either from a psychophysical sense of security that they could defend themselves or from a confidence in being able to determine wrong places and times. All the women admitted fear and anxiety when walking to their cars on the campus, especially after an evening class or activity. None of the men experienced fear on campus at any time. The men could be rather specific in describing when they were afraid: in Harlem, for example, or in certain parts of downtown Paterson, New Jersey—places that have a reputation for violence. But these places could either be avoided or, if not, the men felt capable of self-protective action. Above all, male students said that they *never* feared being attacked simply because they were male. They *never* feared going to a movie or to dinner alone. Their daily activities were not characterized by a concern for their physical integrity.

As I read the literature on terrorism it became clear that both sexual violence and nonviolent sexual intimidation could be better understood as terrorism. For example, although an act of rape, an unnecessary hysterectomy, and the publishing of *Playboy* magazine appear to be quite different, they are in fact more similar than dissimilar. Each is based on fear, hostility, and a need to dominate women. Rape is an act of aggression and possession, not of sexuality. Unnecessary hysterectomies are extraordinary abuses of power rooted in man's concept of woman as primarily a reproductive being and in his need to assert power over reproduction. *Playboy*, like all forms of pornography, attempts to control women through the power of definition. Male pornographers define women's sexuality for their male customers. The basis of pornography is men's fantasies about women's sexuality.

COMPONENTS OF SEXUAL TERRORISM

The literature on terrorism does not provide a precise definition.[1] Mine is taken from Hacker, who says that "terrorism aims to frighten, and by frightening, to dominate and control."[2] Writers agree more readily on the characteristics and functions of terrorism than on a definition. This analysis will focus on five components to illuminate the similarities of and distinctions between sexual terrorism and political terrorism. The five components are: ideology, propaganda, indiscriminate and amoral violence, voluntary compliance, and society's perception of the terrorist and the terrorized.

An *ideology* is an integrated set of beliefs about the world that explains the way things are and provides a vision of how they ought to be. Patriarchy, meaning the "rule of the fathers," is the ideological foundation of sexism in our society. It asserts the superiority of males and the inferiority of females. It also provides the rationale for sexual terrorism. The taproot of patriarchy is the masculine/warrior ideal. Masculinity must include not only a proclivity for violence but also all those characteristics necessary for survival: aggression, control, emotional reserve, rationality, sexual potency, etc. Marc Feigen Fasteau, in *The Male Machine*, argues that "men are brought up with the idea that there ought to be some part of them, under control until released by necessity, that thrives on violence. This capacity, even affinity, for violence, lurking beneath the surface of every real man, is supposed to represent the primal untamed base of masculinity."[3]

Propaganda is the methodical dissemination of information for the purpose of promoting a particular ideology. Propaganda, by definition, is biased or even false information. Its purpose is to present one point of view on a subject and to discredit opposing points of view. Propaganda is essential to the conduct of terrorism. According to Francis Watson, in *Political Terrorism: The Threat and the Response*, "Terrorism must not be defined only in terms of violence, but also in terms of propaganda. The two are in operation together. Violence of terrorism is a coercive means for attempting to influence the thinking and actions of people. Propaganda is a persuasive means for doing the same thing."[4] The propaganda of sexual terrorism is found in all expressions of the popular culture: films, television, music, literature, advertising, pornography. The propaganda of sexual terrorism is also found in the ideas of patriarchy expressed in science, medicine, and psychology.

The third component, which is common to all forms of political terrorism, consists of "indiscriminateness, unpredictability, arbitrariness, ruthless destructiveness and amorality."[5] Indiscriminate violence and amorality are also at the heart of sexual terrorism. Every female is a potential target of violence—at any age, at any time, in any place. In her study of rape, Susan Brownmiller argues that rape is "nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."[6] Further, as we shall see, amorality pervades sexual violence. Child molesters, incestuous fathers, wife beaters, and rapists often do not understand that they have done anything wrong. Their views are routinely shared by police officers, lawyers, and judges, and crimes of sexual violence are rarely punished in American society.

The fourth component of the theory of terrorism is "voluntary compliance." The institutionalization of a system of terror requires the development of mechanisms other than sustained violence to achieve its goals. Violence must be employed to maintain terrorism, but sustained violence can be costly and debilitating. Therefore, strategies for ensuring a significant degree of voluntary compliance must be developed. Sexual terrorism is maintained to a great extent by an elaborate system of sex-role socialization that in effect instructs men to be terrorists in the name of masculinity and women to be victims in the name of femininity.

Sexual and political terrorism differ in the final component, perception of the terrorist and the victim. In political terrorism we know who is the terrorist and who is the victim. We may condemn or condone the terrorist depending on our political views, but we sympathize with the victim. In sexual terrorism, however, we blame the victim and excuse the offender. We believe that the offender either is "sick" and therefore in need of our compassion or is acting out normal male impulses.

TYPES OF SEXUAL TERRORISM

Many types of sexual terrorism are crimes. Yet when we look at the history of these acts we see that they came to be considered criminal not so much to protect women as to adjust power relationships among men. Rape was originally a violation of a father's or husband's property right; consequently, a husband by definition could not rape his wife. Wife beating was condoned by the law and still is condemned in name only. The pornographic presentation of sexual violence serves to direct male violence against women and girls and to contain male violence toward other men.[7] Although proscriptions against incest exist, society assumes a more serious posture toward men who sexually abuse other men's daughters. Sexual harassment is not a crime, and only recently has it been declared an actionable civil offense. Crimes of sexual violence are characterized by ambiguity and diversity in definition and interpretation. Because each state and territory has a separate system of law in addition to the federal system, crimes and punishments are assessed differently throughout the country.

Rape

The most generally accepted definition of rape is "sexual intercourse with a female, not the wife of the perpetrator, without the consent of the female."[8] Seventeen states punish rape within marriage.[9]

Because rape is considered a sexual act, evidence of force and resistance (that is, nonconsent) plays a major role in the conviction or acquittal of rapists. Proof of nonconsent and resistance is not demanded of a victim of any other crime. If one is stopped on the street and robbed one never has to justify nonresistance or prove resistance and nonconsent. Females are expected to resist rape as much as possible, otherwise "consent" is assumed.

John M. MacDonald, in *Rape Offenders and Their Victims,* offers the following advice to law enforcement officials: "To constitute resistance in good faith it must have been commenced at the inception of the advances and continued until the offense was consummated. Resistance by mere words is not sufficient, but such resistance must be by acts, and must be reasonably proportionate to the strength and opportunities of the woman."[10] Passive resistance or compliance, even in a situation that is perceived to be life-threatening, is not, to many prosecutors, clear evidence that the rape was against one's will.

Wife Assault

For centuries it has been assumed that a husband had the right to punish or discipline his wife with physical force. The popular expression, "rule of thumb," originated from English common law, which allowed a husband to beat his wife with a whip or stick no bigger than his thumb. The husband's prerogative was incorporated into American law. Several states had statutes that essentially allowed a man to beat his wife without interference from the courts.[11]

In 1871, in the landmark case of *Fulgham v. State,* an Alabama court ruled that "the privilege, ancient though it be, to beat her with a stick, to pull her hair, choke her, spit in her face or kick her about the floor or to inflict upon her other like indignities, is not now acknowledged by our law."[12] The law, however, has been ambiguous and often contradictory on the issue of wife assault. While the courts established that a man had no right to beat his wife, it also held that a woman could not press charges against her abusive husband. In 1910, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a wife could not charge her husband with assault and battery because it "would open the doors of the courts to accusations of all sorts of one spouse against the other and bring into public notice complaints for assaults, slander and libel."[13] The courts virtually condoned violence for the purpose of maintaining peace.

Laws and public attitudes about the illegality of wife assault and the rights of the victim have been slowly evolving, and attempts are being made to resolve the contradictions. Only three states (California, Hawaii, and Texas) define wife abuse as a felony.[14] In other states, laws applicable to wife battery include assault, assault and battery, aggravated assault, intent to assault or to commit murder, and possession of a deadly weapon with intent to assault.

Sexual Abuse of Children

Defining sexual abuse of children is very difficult. The laws are complex and often contradictory. Generally, sexual abuse of children includes statutory rape, molestation, carnal knowledge, indecent liberties, impairing the morals of a minor, child abuse, child neglect, and incest. Each of these is defined and interpreted differently in each state. Convictions run the gamut from misdemeanors to various degrees of assault and felony. Punishments vary widely from state to state as well.

The philosophy underlying statutory rape laws is that a child below a certain age—arbitrarily fixed by law—is not able to give meaningful consent. Therefore, sexual intercourse with a female below a certain age, with or without the use of force, is a criminal act of rape. Punishment for statutory rape, although rarely imposed, can be as high as life imprisonment. Coexistent with laws on statutory rape are laws on criminal incest. Incest is generally interpreted as sexual activity, most often intercourse, with a blood relative. The difference, then, between statutory rape and incest is the relation of the offender to the child. Statutory rape is committed by someone outside the family; incest, by a member of the family. The penalty for incest, also rarely imposed, is usually no more than ten years in prison. This contrast suggests that sexual abuse of children is tolerated when it occurs within the family and that unqualified protection of children from sexual assault is not the intent of the law.

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" is a new term for an old phenomenon. The research on sexual harassment, as well as the legal interpretation, centers on acts of sexual coercion or intimidation on the job and at school. Lin Farley, in *Sexual Shakedown: The Sexual Harassment of Women on the Job,* describes sexual harassment as "unsolicited nonreciprocal male behavior that asserts a woman's sex role over her function as a worker. It can be any or all of the following: staring at, commenting upon, or touching a woman's body; requests for acquiescence in sexual behavior; repeated nonreciprocated propositions for dates; demands for sexual intercourse; and rape."[15]

Sexual harassment is now considered a form of sex discrimination under some conditions and is therefore a violation of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits sex discrimination in employment, and of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, which prohibits sex-based discrimination in education.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SEXUAL TERRORISM

Those forms of sexual terrorism that are crimes share several common characteristics. Each will be addressed separately, but in the real world these characteristics are linked together and form a vicious circle, which functions to mask the reality of sexual terrorism and thus to perpetuate the system of oppression of females. Crimes of violence against females (1) cut across socioeconomic lines; (2) are the crimes least likely to be reported; (3) when reported, are the crimes least likely to be brought to trial or to result in conviction; (4) are often blamed on the victim; (5) are generally not taken seriously; and (6) are not really about sex.

Violence against Females Cuts across Socioeconomic Lines

The question "Who is the typical rapist, wife beater, incest offender, etc?" is constantly raised. The answer is simple: men. Even among those who commit incest, women are exceedingly rare. The men who commit acts of sexual terrorism are of all ages, races, and religions; they come from all communities, income levels, and educational levels; they are married, single, separated, and divorced. The typical sexually abusive male does not exist.

One of the most common assumptions about sexual violence is that it occurs primarily among the poor, uneducated, and predominately nonwhite populations. Instead, violence committed by the poor and nonwhite is simply more visible because they lack the resources to ensure the privacy that the middle and upper classes can purchase. Most rapes, indeed most incidents of sexual assault, are not reported, and therefore the picture drawn from police records must be viewed as very sketchy.

The data on sexual harassment in work situations indicates that it occurs among all job categories and pay ranges.[16] Sexual harassment is committed by academic men, who are among the most highly educated members of society.

All of the studies on wife battery testify to the fact that wife beating crosses socioeconomic lines. Wife beaters include high government officials, members of the armed forces, businessmen, policemen, physicians, lawyers, clergy, blue-collar workers, and the unemployed.[17] According to Maria Roy, founder and director of New York's Abused Women's Aid in Crisis: "We see abuse of women on all levels of income, age, occupation, and social standing. I've had four women come in recently whose husbands are Ph.D.s—two of them professors at top universities. Another abused woman is married to a very prominent attorney. We counseled battered wives whose husbands are doctors, psychiatrists, even clergymen."[18]

Similarly, in Vincent De Francis's classic study of 250 cases of sexual crimes committed against children, a major finding was that incidents of sexual assault against children cut across class lines.[19]

Since sexual violence is not "nice," we prefer to believe that nice men do not commit these acts and that nice girls and women are not victims. Our refusal to accept the fact that violence against females is widespread on all levels of society strongly inhibits our ability to develop any meaningful strategies toward the elimination of sexual violence. Moreover, because of underreporting, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how widespread it is.

Crimes of Sexual Violence Are the Least Likely to Be Reported

The underreporting issue, often called the "tip-of-the-iceberg theory," is common to all crimes against females. The FBI recognizes that rape is the most frequently committed violent crime and is seriously underreported. According to FBI data for 1981, 81,536 rapes were reported.[20] The FBI and other criminologists suggest that this figure be multiplied by at least a factor of ten to compensate for underreporting. The FBI *Uniform Crime Report* for 1981 estimates that a forcible rape occurs every six minutes.[21] This estimate is based on reported cases; to account for the high rate of underreporting the FBI estimates that a rape occurs every two minutes. The number of forcible rapes reported to the police has been increasing every year. Between 1977 and 1981, there has been a 29 percent increase in reported forcible rapes.[22] It is estimated that one-half of all rape victims are under eighteen years of age and 25 percent of rape victims are under twelve years of age.[23]

The FBI's *Uniform Crime Report* indexes 10 million reported crimes a year but does not collect statistics on wife abuse. Since statutes in most states do not identify wife beating as a crime, incidents of wife beating are usually classified under "assault and battery" and "disputes." However, the FBI estimates that wife abuse is three times as common as rape. Estimates that 50 percent of American wives are battered are not uncommon in the literature.[24]

"The problem of sexual abuse of children is of unknown national dimensions," according to Vincent De Francis, "but findings strongly point to the probability of an enormous national incidence many times larger than the reported incidence of physical abuse of children."[25] He discussed the existence of a wide gap between the reported incidence and the actual occurrence of sexual assault against children and suggested that "the reported incidence represents the top edge of the moon as it rises over the mountain."[26]

Incest, according to author and researcher Florence Rush, is the *Best Kept Secret*.[27] The estimates, however speculative, are frightening. Alfred Kinsey, in a study involving 4,441 female subjects, found that 24 percent had been approached sexually by an adult male prior to their adolescence; in 23 percent of the cases that adult male was a relative.[28] Significantly, all the respondents in the Kinsey study were white and predominately middle class. The Child Sexual Abuse Project in San Jose, California, estimates that there are approximately 26,000 cases of father–daughter incest each year. This estimate excludes incestuous behavior by grandfathers, uncles, brothers, cousins.[29] Cases reported to the Santa Clara Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Program increased from 31 in 1974 to 269 in 1976, suggesting that the incidence of incest may be grossly underestimated.[30] Child-protection organizations estimate that the number of reported incidents of child sexual abuse ranges from one hundred thousand to 1 million and that the majority of sexual assaults against children are not reported.[31]

Accurate data on the incidence of sexual harassment is impossible to obtain. Women have traditionally accepted sexual innuendo as a fact of life and only recently have begun to report and analyze the dimensions of sexual coercion in the workplace. Research indicates that sexual harassment is pervasive. Lin Farley found that accounts of sexual harassment within the federal government, the country's largest single employer, are extensive and that surveys of working women in the private sector indicate "a dangerously high rate of incidence of this abuse."[32]

In 1976, over nine thousand women responded to a survey on sexual harassment conducted by *Redbook* magazine. More than 92 percent reported sexual harassment as a problem; a majority of the respondents described it as serious; and nine out of ten reported that they had personally experienced one or more forms of unwanted sexual attentions on the job.[33] The Ad Hoc Group on Equal Rights for Women attempted to gather data on sexual harassment at the United Nations. The questionnaire was confiscated by UN officials, but 875 staff members had already responded; 73 percent were women, and more than half of them said that they had personally experienced or were aware of incidents of sexual harassment at the UN.[34] In May 1975, the Women's Section of the Human Affairs Program at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, distributed the first questionnaire on sexual harassment. Of the 155 responses, 92 percent identified sexual harassment as a serious problem; 70 percent had personally experienced some form of sexual harassment; and 56 percent reported incidents of physical harassment.[35]

A pilot study conducted by the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs on Sexual Harassment in Academia concluded:

> The sexual harassment of postsecondary students is an increasingly visible problem of great, but as yet unascertained, dimensions. Once regarded as an isolated, purely personal problem, it has gained civil rights credibility as its scale and consequences have become known, and is correctly viewed as a form of illegal sex-based discrimination.[36]

Crimes of Violence against Females Have the Lowest Conviction Rates

The common denominator in the underreporting of all sexual assaults is fear. Females have been well trained in silence and passivity. Early and sustained sex-role socialization teaches that women are responsible for the sexual behavior of men and that women cannot be trusted. These beliefs operate together. They function to keep women silent about their victimization and to keep others from believing women when they do come forward. The victim's fear that she will not be believed and, as a consequence, that the offender will not be punished is not unrealistic. Sex offenders are rarely punished in our society.

Rape has the lowest conviction rate of all violent crimes. On a national average, one rapist in twenty is arrested, one out of thirty prosecuted, and one in sixty is convicted.[37] In *Forcible Rape: The Crime, the Victim, and the Offender*, the authors report that the conviction rate for Los Angeles County is less than 10 percent[38] and that "in no recent year have more than eight percent of rape arrests resulted in rape convictions" in New York City. The authors conclude that rapists in New York City have enjoyed "almost complete immunity" from prosecution.[39]

Data on prosecution and conviction of wife beaters are practically nonexistent. According to Roger Langley and Richard Levy, authors of *Wife-Beating: The Silent Crisis*, "the vast majority of wife-beaters are never prosecuted. In fact, they are seldom even charged. The battered wife has to overcome an incredible array of roadblocks and detours built into the legal system before she can prosecute her husband."[40]

The roadblocks are both technical and attitudinal. The laws on wife beating are confusing and vary from state to state. Their application varies with the attitudes and beliefs of law-enforcement personnel. Police indifference to wife beating has been extensively documented by victims.

> Dee Zurbrium of Laurel, Maryland, says she called police for help and was told, "We can't get involved in a domestic quarrel, Lady. The best thing you can do is get out of there because next time you may be dead."
>
> The *Detroit Free Press*, in an article headlined "Emergency Number Still Has Kinks," reports: "A near-breathless woman, beaten by her husband, dialed 911 to ask for police assistance. 'Does he have a weapon?' the operator asked.

> "She answered he did not.
> 'Then I am sorry. We won't be able to help you,' the operator said to the dismayed woman."
>
> One woman called the police after her husband broke her nose. They took her to the hospital, bleeding and with both eyes swelling shut, but they refused to arrest her husband. "You don't want to do that, honey," said the cop, reassuringly. "It's something that happens in every man's life."[41]

It is routine policy for police officers and lawyers to discourage women from filing charges against an abusive husband. The instructors at the Police Training Academy in Michigan use the following guidelines in teaching police officers how to convince a woman not to press charges:

a. Avoid arrest if possible. Appeal to their vanity.
b. Explain the procedure of obtaining a warrant.
    (1) Complainant must sign complaint.
    (2) Must appear in court.
    (3) Consider loss of time.
    (4) Cost of court.
c. State that your only interest is to prevent a breach of the peace.
d. Explain that attitudes usually change by court time.
e. Recommend a postponement.
    (1) Court not in session.
    (2) No judge available.
f. Don't be too harsh or critical.[42]

It is also common practice for police officers and lawyers to use outright intimidation to convince battered women not to pursue the matter legally. Battered wives are confronted with statements or questions such as these: "You know he could lose his job." "Who will support you if he is locked up?" "Why don't you just kiss and make up?" "What did you do to make him hit you?" "Lady, why do you want to make trouble?"[43]

It is ironic that police officers do not view what they call a "domestic disturbance," "lover's quarrel," or "family spat" as serious. The category of answering family disturbance calls accounts for about 20 percent of the incidents of police killed on duty.[44]

According to Detroit Police Commander James Bannon:

> The attrition rate in domestic violence cases is unbelievable. In 1972, for instance, there were 4,900 assaults of this kind which had survived the screening process long enough to at least have a warrant prepared and the complainant referred to the assault and battery squad. Through the process of conciliation, complainant harassment and prosecutor discretion, fewer than 300 of these cases were ultimately tried by a court of law. And in most of these the court used the judicial process to attempt to conciliate rather than adjudicate.[45]

Mr. Bannon argues: "You can readily understand why the women ultimately take the law into their own hands or despair of finding relief at all. *Or why the male feels protected by the system in his use of violence*" (emphasis mine).[46]

In his study of child sexual abuse, Vincent De Francis found that plea-bargaining and dismissal of cases were the norm. The study sample consisted of 173 cases brought to prosecution. Of these, 44 percent (seventy-six cases) were dismissed; 22 percent (thirty-eight cases) voluntarily accepted a lesser plea; 11 percent (six cases) were found guilty of a lesser charge; and 2 percent (four cases) were found guilty as charged. The remaining thirty-five cases were either pending (fifteen); terminated because the offender was committed to a mental institution (five) or because the offender absconded (seven); or no information was available (eight).

Of the fifty-three offenders who were convicted or pleaded guilty, thirty offenders escaped a jail sentence. Twenty-one received suspended sentences and were placed on probation; seven received suspended sentences without probation; and two were fined a sum of money. The other 45 percent, twenty-three offenders, received prison terms from under six months to three years; five were given indeterminate sentences—that is, a minimum term of one year and a maximum term subject to the discretion of the state board of parole.[47]

Most of the victims of sexual harassment in the Cornell University study were unwilling to use available procedures, such as grievances, to remedy their complaints, because they believed that nothing would be done. Their perception is based on reality; of the 12 percent who did complain, over half found that nothing was done in their cases.[48] The low adjudication and punishment rates of sexual harassment cases are particularly revealing in light of the fact that the offender is known and identifiable and that there is no fear of "mistaken identity," as there is in rape cases. While offenders accused of familial violence—incest and wife abuse—are also known, the courts' posture is heavily in favor of keeping the family intact, or so they say. There is no such motivation in cases of sexual harassment.

Blaming the Victim of Sexual Violence Is Pervasive

The data on conviction rates of men who have committed acts of violence against females must be understood in the context of social/political attitudes about women. The male-dominated society has evoked powerful myths to justify male violence against females and to ensure that these acts will rarely be punished. Victims of sexual violence are almost always suspect. We have developed an intricate network of beliefs and attitudes that perpetuate the idea that "victims of sex crimes have a hidden psychological need to be victimized."[49] We tend to believe either that the female willingly participated in her victimization or that she outright lied about it. Either way, we blame the victim and excuse or condone the offender.

Consider, for example, the operative myths about rape, wife battery, incest, and sexual harassment.

Rape

All women want to be raped.

No woman can be raped if she doesn't want it (you-can't-thread-a-moving-needle argument).

She asked for it.

She changed her mind afterwards.

When she says no she means yes.

If you are going to be raped you might as well enjoy it.

Wife Battery

Some women need to be beaten

A good kick in the ass will straighten her out.

She needs a punch in the mouth every so often to keep her in line.

She must have done something to provoke him.

Incest

The child was the seducer.

The child imagined it.

Sexual Harassment

She was seductive.

She misunderstood, I was just being friendly.

Underlying all the myths about victims of sexual violence is the belief that the victim causes and is responsible for her victimization. Underlying the attitudes about the male offender is the belief that he could not help himself; that is, he was ruled by his biology and/or he was seduced. The victim becomes the offender and the offender becomes the victim. Clearly, two very important processes are at work here: blaming the victim and absolving the offender. These serve a vital political purpose: to protect our view of the world as orderly and just and to help us make sense of sexual violence. The rationale is that sexual violence against an innocent female is unjustifiable; therefore, she must have done something wrong or it would not have happened. Making a victim believe she is at fault erases not only the individual offender's culpability but also the responsibility of the society as a whole. Sexual violence becomes an individual problem, not a sociopolitical one.

One need only read the testimony of victims of sexual violence to see the powerful effects of blaming the victim. From the National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs Report on Sexual Harassment of Students:

> I was ashamed, thought it was my fault, and was worried that the school would take action against me (for "unearned" grades) if they found out about it.
>
> This happened seventeen years ago, and you are the first person I've been able to discuss it with in all that time. He's still at ____, and probably still doing it.
>
> I'm afraid to tell anyone here about it, and I'm just hoping to get through the year so I can leave.[50]

From *Wife-Beating: The Silent Crisis,* Judge Stewart Oneglia comments:

> Many women find it shameful to admit they don't have a good marriage. The battered wife wraps her bloody head in a towel, goes to the hospital, and explains to the doctor she fell

down the stairs. After a few years of the husband telling her he beats her because she is ugly, stupid, or incompetent, she is so psychologically destroyed that she believes it.[51]

A battered woman from Boston relates:

> I actually thought if I only learned to cook better or keep a cleaner house, everything would be okay. I put up with the beatings for five years before I got desperate enough to get help.[52]

Another battered woman said,

> When I came to, I wanted to die, the guilt and depression were so bad. Your whole sense of worth is tied up with being a successful wife and having a happy marriage. If your husband beats you, then your marriage is a failure, and you're a failure. It's so horribly the opposite of how it is supposed to be.[53]

Katherine Brady shared her experience as an incest survivor in *Father's Days: A True Story of Incest*. She concluded her story with the following:

> I've learned a great deal by telling my story. I hope other incest victims may experience a similar journey of discovery by reading it. If nothing else, I would wish them to hear in this tale the two things I needed most, but had to wait years to hear: "You are not alone and you are not to blame."[54]

Sexual Violence Is Not Taken Seriously

Another characteristic of sexual violence is that these crimes are not taken seriously. Society manifests this attitude by simply denying the existence of sexual violence, denying the gravity of these acts, joking about them, and attempting to legitimate them.

Many offenders echo the societal norm by expressing genuine surprise when they are confronted by authorities. This seems to be particularly true in cases of sexually abused children, wife beating, and sexual harassment. In her study of incest, Florence Rush found that child molesters very often do not understand that they have done anything wrong.[55] This is true as well for men who beat their wives. Many men still believe that they have an inalienable right to rule "their women." Batterers, for example, often cite their right to discipline their wives; incestuous fathers cite their right to instruct their daughters in sexuality. Clearly, these men are acting on the belief that women are the property of men.

The concept of females as property of men extends beyond the family unit, as the evidence on sexual harassment indicates. "Are you telling me that this kind of horsing around may constitute an actionable offense?" queried a character on a recent television special on sexual harassment.[56] This represents the typical response of a man accused of sexual harassment. Men have been taught that they are the hunters, and women—all women—are fair game. The mythology about the workaday world abounds with sexual innuendo. Concepts of "sleazy" (read "sexually accessible") nurses and dumb, big-breasted, blond secretaries are standard fare for comedy routines. When the existence of sexual violence can no longer be denied, a common response is to joke about it in order to belittle it. "If you are going to be raped, you might as well enjoy it" clearly belittles the violence of rape. The public still laughs when Ralph threatens Alice with "One of these days, POW—right in the kisser." Recently, a television talk-show host remarked that "incest is a game the whole family can play." The audience laughed uproariously.

Sexual Violence Is Not about Sex

The final characteristic common to all forms of violence against females is perhaps the most difficult to comprehend. Sexual assault, contrary to popular belief, is not about sex. The research that has been done in every area of sexual assault suggests that while the motivation is complex, it is not rooted in sexual frustration or sexual prowess. Rather, the motivation for the violent abuse of women has to do with the need to assert a masculine image or a masculine privilege as defined by the culture. In an article in *Ms.* magazine, "I Never Set Out to Rape Anybody," a rapist talked about his motivation to rape. He said that the image of men (masculinity) as hypersexual, violent, and dominant and the image of women (femininity) as liking tough men made him feel compelled to live up to this standard.[57]

A rapist is usually regarded as either a healthy male who was the victim of a seductive and vengeful woman, a sexually frustrated man who was no longer able to control his desires, or a "pervert" or "sex fiend." These views all suggest that the rapist's behavior is motivated by sexual desire. The assumption that rape, forceful and often violent, is about the satisfaction of sexual need or desire is entirely false. In his study *Men Who Rape: The Psychology of the Offender*, A. Nicholas Groth reports that "careful clinical study of offenders reveals that rape is in fact serving primarily nonsexual needs. It is the sexual expression of power and anger."[58]

Men do not rape for sexual pleasure. They rape to assert power and dominance. Jack Fremont's interviews of several rapists revealed the notion of masculine privilege as a dominant motive. For example:

Interviewer: Do you think many men commit rape?

Jimmy: Oh, yes, I know damn well they do! With no more feeling involved and no more neurosis than just, I want you, and I can't have you, so I'll take you.[59]

David Finkelhor, in his study *Sexually Victimized Children*, argues that the sexual exploitation of women and children is made easier in a society that is dominated by men. "Sex in any society is a valuable commodity, and a dominant group—such as men—will try to rig things to maximize their access to it."[60] He maintains that "the cultural beliefs that underpin the male-dominated system contribute to making women and children sexually vulnerable. For example, to the extent that family members are regarded as possessions, men can take unusual and usually undetected liberties with them."[61] Research by Robert Geiser supports the conclusion that sexual gratification is not the dominant motive in the abuse of children. A daughter asked her father, "Why did you do it to me?" He replied, "You were available and you were vulnerable."[62] Research on offenders suggests that men turn to children because their adult relationships are complicated, unsatisfying, stressful, or anxiety-laden. According to Geiser, child molesters need to exercise authority and avoid rejection: "The child's vulnerability and helplessness make her easier to overpower and dominate."[63]

Husbands who batter their wives are often trying to prove their superiority. Del Martin found that wife beating is unquestionably an example of power abuse. Martin characterized the battering husband this way:

> He is probably angry with himself and frustrated by his life. He may put up a good front in public, but in the privacy and intimacy of his home he may not be able to hide, either from himself or his wife, his feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. The man who is losing his grip on his job or his prospects may feel compelled to prove that he is at least the master of his home. Beating his wife is one way for him to appear a winner.[64]

Sexual harassment is also not about sex but about power. Farley argues that the sexual harassment of women at work arose from men's need to maintain control of women's labor.[65] Sexual harassment serves to keep women (individually and collectively) economically inferior and ensures the system of male dominance.[66]

CONCLUSION

Sexual terrorism is a system that functions to maintain male supremacy through actual and implied violence. Violence against the female body (rape, battery, incest, and harassment) and the perpetuation of fear of violence form the basis of patriarchal power. Both violence and fear are functional. Without the power to intimidate and to punish, the domination of women in all spheres of society—political, social, and economic—could not exist.

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DIANNE HERMAN

The rape culture

When Susan Griffin wrote, "I have never been free of the fear of rape," she touched a responsive chord in most women.[1] Every woman knows the fear of being alone at home late at night or the terror that strikes her when she receives an obscene phone call. She knows also of the "mini-rapes"—the pinch in the crowded bus, the wolf whistle from a passing car, the stare of a man looking at her bust during a conversation. Griffin has argued, "Rape is a kind of terrorism which severely limits the freedom of women and makes women dependent on men."[2]

Women live their lives according to a rape schedule.

> There is what might be called a universal curfew on women in this country. Whenever a woman walks alone at night, whenever she hitchhikes, she is aware that she is violating well-established rules of conduct and, as a result, that she faces the possibility of rape. If in one of these situations she *is* raped, the man will almost always escape prosecution and the woman will be made to feel responsible because she was somehow "asking for it."[3]

One solution to this problem is suggested by Golda Meir. When a cabinet meeting discussed the number of assaults at night on women, one minister suggested that the women stay home after dark. Meir replied, "But it's the men who are attacking the women. If there's to be a curfew, let the men stay home, not the women."[4] Golda Meir's suggestion wouldn't strike us as funny or odd if we did not assume that women must bear the responsibility for men's sexual aggression.

Underlying this view of rape is a traditional concept of male and female sexuality, one that assumes that males are sexually aggressive and females are sexually passive. Those sharing these assumptions conclude that rape is a natural act that arises out of a situation in which men are unrestrained by convention or threat of punishment. Thus the only way to stop rape is to prevent the opportunity for it to happen by insisting that women avoid "dangerous" situations or by providing a deterrent through stiff penalties. An example of this mentality is Judge Archie Simonson's 1977 explanation when he released on probation a fifteen-year-old boy who raped a girl in a high school stairwell. "This community is well-known to be sexually permissive," he said. "Should we punish a fifteen- or sixteen-year-old boy who reacts to it normally?"[5] (Simonson's comment provoked a successful recall campaign by his Madison, Wisconsin, constituents. He

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was replaced by a female lawyer who won the judgeship with the support of local feminist groups.)

Most studies on rape take as a given the aggressive nature of male sexuality. Hans von Hentig wrote in the early fifties that the incidence of rape reflects a demographic imbalance, where there are too many males compared to females in the population. Yet studies sympathetic to his basic premise have found no relationship between rape and a lack of females for male sexual outlet.[6] Along the same lines, proposals have been offered to make prostitution legal in the hope that the incidence of rape will decrease. However, as researchers point out, "Three cities that had allowed open prostitution actually experienced a decline in rape and other sexual assaults after prostitution was prohibited."[7] Because rape is held to be a natural behavior, there have been few attempts to understand the cultural conditions that give rise to this crime.

Animals in their natural habitat do not rape, and many societies have existed where rape was not known.[8] According to Margaret Mead in *Sex and Temperament,* the Arapesh do not have "any conception of the male nature that might make rape understandable to them."[9] Among the Arapesh, men and women are both expected to act with gentleness and concern. Thus there is no reason to maintain the assumption that rape is a natural act.

Anthropological studies like those of Margaret Mead have demonstrated that sexual attitudes and practices are learned, not instinctual. In this country people are raised to believe that men are sexually active and aggressive and women are sexually passive and submissive. Since it is assumed that men cannot control their desires, every young woman is taught that she must be the responsible party in any sexual encounter. In such a society men and women are trained to believe that the sexual act involves domination. Normal heterosexual relations are pictured as consisting of an aggressive male forcing himself on a female who seems to fear sex but unconsciously wants to be overpowered.

Because of the aggressive/passive, dominant/submissive, me-Tarzan/you-Jane nature of the relationship between the sexes in our culture, there is a close association between violence and sexuality. Words that are slang sexual terms, for example, frequently accompany assaultive behavior or gestures. "Fuck you" is meant as a brutal attack in verbal terms. In the popular culture, "James Bond alternately whips out his revolver and his cock, and though there is no known connection between the skills of a gun-fighter and love-making, pacifism seems suspiciously effeminate."[10] The imagery of sexual relations between males and females in books, songs, advertising, and films is frequently that of a sadomasochistic relationship thinly veiled by a romantic facade. Thus it is very difficult in our society to differentiate rape from "normal" heterosexual relations. Indeed, our culture can be characterized as a rape culture because the image of heterosexual intercourse is based on a rape model of sexuality.

If healthy heterosexuality were characterized by loving, warm, and reciprocally satisfying actions, then rape could be defined as sex without consent, therefore involving either domination or violence. Instead, rape is legally defined as sexual intercourse by a male with a female, *other than his wife,* without the consent of the woman and effected by force, duress, intimidation, or deception as to the nature of the act. The spousal exemption in the law, which still remains in effect in thirty-three of the fifty states, means that a husband cannot be guilty of raping his wife, even if he forces intercourse against her will. The implication of this loophole is that *violent, unwanted* sex does not necessarily define rape. Instead, rape is *illegal* sex—that is, sexual assault by a man who has no legal rights over the woman. In other words, in the law's eyes violence in legal sexual intercourse is permissible, but sexual relations with a woman who is not one's property is not. The statutory rape laws support this contention very well. In this instance, rape is simply intercourse outside marriage with a minor, who is considered too young to render legal consent (as a minor, her property—her body—is still controlled by others).

From their inception, rape laws have been established not to protect women, but to protect women's property value for men.

> Society's view of rape was purely a matter of economics—of assets and liabilities. When a married woman was raped, her husband was wronged, not her. If she was unmarried, her father suffered since his investment depreciated. It was the monetary value of a woman which determined the gravity of the crime. Because she had no personal rights under the law, her own emotions simply didn't matter.[11]

Because rape meant that precious merchandise was irreparably damaged, the severity of the punishment was dependent on whether the victim was a virgin. In some virgin rapes, biblical law ordered that the rapist marry the victim since she was now devalued property.[12] The social status of the victim was also important, as a woman of higher social status was more valuable.

While these laws are no longer present in the same form, attitudes and customs have remained much the same. For example, "shotgun weddings" are still with us, and rape is far more likely to be prosecuted if the woman is a virgin of the middle or upper class who is attacked by a lower-class male.[13] Gary LaFree recently examined the effect of race in the handling of 881 sexual assaults in a large midwestern city, and he found that black males who assaulted white women received more serious charges, longer sentences, and more severe punishment in terms of executed sentences and incarceration in the state penitentiary.[14] On the other hand, rape is least prosecuted if the victim is black. The rape of poor, black women is not an offense against men of power. But as Eldridge Cleaver has explained, the black male who sexually assaults a white woman is seen as a vengeful castrator, deserving of the most severe punishment.[15]

In a society in which a man's worth is measured by his ability to be aggressive, the rapist is demonstrating that he is more masculine than a man who cannot protect, hold on to, and control his woman. "In raping another man's woman, a man may aggrandize his own manhood and concurrently reduce that of another man."[16] Rape is therefore an offense that one man commits against another. Many men perceive a sexual assault against a woman with whom they have been intimate as an attack against themselves. One husband whose wife was raped said, for example, "It's a matter of territorial imperative. I fantasized ways of getting back at him, like shoving a shot-gun down his throat and pulling the trigger until it quit clicking."[17] Another husband admitted, "I wanted to kill that bastard. I wanted to destroy him for what he'd done to me."[18] The overwhelming desire for revenge reflects two strong needs: revenge would not only allow men to express their anger at being humiliated but also serve to restore their self-esteem in socially prescribed ways (acting in a "manly," aggressive fashion).[19]

The husband whose wife has been sexually violated not only may question his masculinity but also may feel that his wife participated in some way in her own victimization or enjoyed the experience. His self-esteem is thus lowered by his wife's presumed complicity as well as by the rapist's act.

Husbands who blame their wives may view the rape as marital infidelity. Victims have reported that their husband's inability to "adjust" to the fact that the rape had occurred was the cause of their divorce.[20] Studies have shown a considerable difference in the way that men and women, in general, perceive the victim's causal role in the crime of rape. One group of researchers stated that "typically, males expressed greater agreement with the notion of a rape victim being responsible or in some way precipitating her victimization. Women, on the other hand, were apparently less willing to subscribe to such notions and perceived the rape victim to be less personally responsible."[21]

One of the most surprising findings of studies on rape is that the rapist is normal in personality, appearance, intelligence, behavior, and sexual drive.[22] According to Amir, the only significant psychological difference between the rapist and the normal, well-adjusted male appears to be the greater tendency of the former to express rage and violence. But this finding probably tends to overemphasize the aggressive personality characteristics of rapists, since generally only imprisoned rapists have been studied. Those few rapists who are sentenced to prison tend to be the more obviously violent offenders. In fact, studies by some researchers have found one type of rapist who is fairly meek and mild-mannered.[23] What is clear is that the rapist is not an exotic freak. Rather, rape evolves out of a situation in which "normal" males feel a need to prove themselves to be "men" by displaying dominance over females.

In our society men demonstrate their competence as people by being "masculine." Part of this definition of masculinity involves a contempt for anything feminine or for females in general. Reported rapes, in fact, are frequently associated with some form of ridicule and sexual humiliation, such as urination on the victim, anal intercourse, fellatio, and ejaculation in the victim's face and hair. Insertion into the woman's vagina of broomsticks, bottles, and other phallic objects is not an uncommon coup de grace.[24] The overvaluing of toughness expresses itself in a disregard for anything associated with fragility. In the rapist's view, his assertion of maleness is automatically tied to a violent repudiation of anything feminine.

Nothing supports more convincingly the premise that rape in our society is the act of a male attempting to assert his masculinity than the studies that have been conducted on homosexual rapes in prisons. Interestingly, researchers have discovered that aggressors in prison rape cases usually have little or no prior history of homosexual behavior.[25] They do not consider themselves homosexuals, and neither do the other inmates. Rather, they equate their actions with those of an aggressive, heterosexual male. They are often called "jockers" or "wolves" by other inmates, terms that characterize them as males. One researcher commented with some astonishment:

> We were struck by the fact that the typical sexual aggressor does not consider himself to be a homosexual, or even to have engaged in homosexual acts. This seems to be based upon his startlingly primitive view of sexual relationships, one that defines as male whichever partner is aggressive and as homosexual whichever partner is passive.[26]

While the other inmates and the aggressors consider their behavior normal under circumstances of heterosexual deprivation, Davis has noted that sexual release is not the primary motivation of the rapist. Rather the motive appears to be the need of some males in prison to exercise control and domination over others.

> A primary goal of the sexual aggressor, it is clear, is the conquest and degradation of his victim. We repeatedly found that aggressors used such language as "Fight or fuck," "We're gonna make a girl out of you."[27]

The attempt to control other men, and in fact to transform them into women (passive, sexual objects), demonstrates to the rapist himself and to others of the prison population that he is in fact a "real man." Genet wrote, "A male that fucks another male is a double-male."[28] Being removed from the heterosexual world, the prison rapist needs to affirm his identity as a male by being dominant over less "masculine" men. "A man who has become accustomed to validating his masculinity through regular interaction with members of the opposite sex may suddenly find his ego-image in grave jeopardy once a prison sentence consigns him to an all-male world."[29] Imprisonment knocks out whatever props the rapist may have established to prove his masculinity. Only the demonstration of sexual and physical prowess can stave off feelings of emasculation in the limited environment of the prison.

Many prison rapists display little, if any, concern for the attitudes or feelings of their partners. One study reported that a group of seventeen men raped one inmate over the course of four hours.[30] Another prisoner was raped repeatedly even after he was bleeding from his rectum, had become ill, and had vomited. But the callousness of the rapist's attitude toward his victim is required by the prison culture. For, in the narrow view of sexuality subscribed to by most inmates, one is either a "woman" or a "man." If any member of the prison population displays emotion or vulnerability, he is likely to be tagged a "woman" and is therefore open to sexual attack. It is for this reason that many inmates refuse to aid the victim and may actually take part in a gang-bang themselves. In a world where one is either dominant and a rapist or submissive and a victim, the pressures to be the former are so great that many men find themselves forced to be the sexual violators of others.

The rapist's attraction to dominance and violence stems from his interpretation of sexuality—"man ravishes, woman submits."[31] Many rapists believe that women enjoy sadomasochistic sex. One group of authors has said of the rape offender:

> He sees her struggle and protestation not as a refusal but as part of her own sexual excitation. "Women like to get roughed up, they enjoy a good fight." This belief is maintained even when the victim is literally fighting for her life and the offender has to brutally injure her to force her to submit to intercourse.[32]

In one instance where a sixty-three-year-old woman was robbed and raped at gunpoint by a twenty-four-year-old man, her assailant threw her a kiss and said before running away, "I bet I made your day.[33] Some offenders have been incredulous when arrested, complaining that they may have been a little rough but that the women enjoyed their advances.

One of the most overlooked aspects of rape is that it is frequently a group phenomenon. In Amir's study, 43 percent of the cases involved two or more offenders. Out of a total of 646 cases, 370 were single rapes, 105 were pair rapes, and 171 were group rapes.[34] The rapist in a group rape is not only expressing his hostility toward women and asserting his masculinity to himself but also proving his manhood to others. Group rapes are usually characterized by a considerable amount of violence, "even though this is one situation in which no brutality, no threat even, would be necessary to subdue the victim."[35] The measure of masculinity is not just the ability to have sexual intercourse with a female but also the ability to exert control over her, and control is equated with dominance. "Through the forcing of the victim to sexual relations the rapist expresses, proves, tests, and gains his image of masculinity, which involves sexual as well as social dominance over women."[36] In addition, acts of sexual humiliation are more common in group rapes.[37] The group most likely to be offenders in either pair or group rapes are youths in the ten-to-fourteen age bracket.[38]

In general, rapists tend to be very young. Amir found offenders were most likely to be between fifteen and nineteen years old.[39] According to the *Uniform Crime Reports*, published by the FBI, the age group of males between sixteen and twenty-four has the greatest concentration of arrests for forcible rape. Of the men charged with this crime in 1981, 52 percent were under twenty-five, with 27 percent of the arrestees being in the eighteen-to-twenty-two age group.[40] On reflection this should come as no surprise, for adolescence is the time when most males probably feel the most doubts about their masculinity and the consequent need to affirm it. Brownmiller captures this insight in a personal reflection:

> They are desperately trying to learn the way to be successful men. When I have stood, almost mesmerized, on my Fourteenth Street subway platform and watched a gang of youths methodically assault a gum machine for its pennies—in escalation of a dare—I could only think *That could be my body.*[41]

Perhaps this need of some men to prove their masculinity to themselves and to others explains why rape is so common in war. The U.S. military has generally eulogized the values of masculinity and emphasized aggressiveness: the Marines built their image on their ability to form "men" out of adolescent youths. For those who lead armies, stressing that soldiers are "real men" is a perfect mechanism by which to keep in line those who might otherwise question the validity of a military conquest. Cowardice in the face of the enemy is equated with femininity.

At the same time, however, the real dangers of combat cause many men to question their masculinity. Such situations are ripe for rape.

> In 1966, an American patrol held a 19-year-old Vietnamese girl captive for several days, taking turns raping her and finally murdering her. The sergeant planned the crime in advance, telling the soldiers during the mission's briefing that the girl would improve their "morale." When one soldier refused to take part in the rape, the sergeant called him "queer" and "chicken," another testified later that he joined in the assault to avoid such insults.[42]

While violence is particularly associated with rape, it is not absent from ordinary heterosexual relations. In Kirkpatrick and Kanin's study of male sexual aggression in dating and courtship relations in the late 1950s, first-semester college women were asked to report forceful sexual attempts they considered offensive. Behavior considered repugnant to the women included forced necking, forced petting above and below the waist, attempted intercourse, and rape. Of the 291 responding women, 56 percent reported themselves offended at least once during the academic year at some level of erotic intimacy.[43] A large proportion of these were serious sexual assaults.

> The experiences of being offended were not altogether associated with trivial situations as shown by the fact that 20.9% were offended by forceful attempts to intercourse and 6.2% by "aggressively forceful attempts at sexual intercourse in the course of which menacing threats or coercive infliction of physical pain were employed."[44]

Those women most likely to experience forced petting or intercourse were regular dates, "pinned" or engaged to their attackers.[45] *Ms.* magazine recently reported on a series of studies on college campuses confirming that, even given new and more liberal attitudes about premarital sex and women's liberation, date rape and other forms of acquaintance rape may be reaching epidemic proportions in higher education. In some cases women have even been assaulted by men ostensibly acting as protective escorts to prevent rape.[46] *Cosmopolitan* magazine found in its September 1980 survey that, of the more than 106,000 women who responded, 24 percent stated that they had been raped at least once: 51 percent of those had been raped by friends, 37 percent by strangers, 18 percent by relatives, and 3 percent by husbands.[47]

Studies such as these, in which women report anonymously to researchers instead of to legal authorities, seem to indicate that rape is a crime commonly committed by an assailant who is known to the victim. Even in cases where women do report to police, victim and offender are frequently acquainted. In a 1972 study undertaken by the National League of Cities, it was found that victim–offender relationships differed from city to city but that generally between 33 percent and 48 percent of victims reporting knew their attacker.[48]

Indeed, one of the most common myths attached to the crime of rape is the notion that the rapist is a stranger to his victim. When the word *rape* is mentioned, most people conjure up images of a woman alone walking late at night in a bad section of a large city. She is being followed by a tall, dark (black?) male who overtakes her, throws her in an alley, and rapes her. Perhaps the only accurate parts of this image are that rape is much more likely to occur in urban areas and at night.[49]

The myth that rape is committed only by a stranger serves to keep many women from reporting an unpleasant sexual episode with a man known to them—or even defining such an incident as attempted rape. It also serves to keep the men involved from construing their actions to be those of a rapist.

> The male learns the same basic mythology of rape as the woman. He is aware of the notion that rape can only be committed by a stranger. This definition can serve as a justification since it precludes the possibility that he can be called a rapist after an encounter with a woman who knew his name.[50]

The fact that victim and offender are acquainted in such a high percentage of reported cases has sometimes been interpreted to mean that large numbers of rapes are precipitated by the victim. Amir classified rape cases as victim-precipitated when

> the victims actually—or so it was interpreted by the offender—agreed to sexual relations but retracted before the actual act or did not resist strongly enough when the suggestion was made by the offenders. The term applies also to cases in which the victim enters vulnerable situations charged with sexuality, especially when she uses what could be taken as an invitation to sexual relations.[51]

Despite such a broad definition, Amir found that only 19 percent of all rapes in his study were victim-precipitated. Some of the factors characteristic of these types of rapes were the victim's "bad" reputation; the fact that the victim met the offender in a bar, at a picnic, or at a party; or the involvement of the victim and the offender in a "primary relationship," excluding relatives.

It is difficult to imagine, however, that offenders could misinterpret the sexual signals they thought they were receiving given the finding that the closer the relationship between the participants in rape, the greater is the use of physical force. In fact, in Amir's study, neighbors and acquaintances were the most likely to engage in brutal rape. Amir was forced to conclude that rape involving people who know each other is not the result of a sexual encounter in which a woman "teases" a man.

> In general, the analysis of the interpersonal relations between victim and offender lent support to those who reject the myth of the offender who attacks victims unknown to him. But equally rejected is the notion that rape is generally an affair between, or a result of intimate relations between victim and rapist.[52]

Once it is understood that rape occurs quite commonly between people who are acquainted, other findings about this crime start to make sense. Most studies, for example, report that about half of all rapes occur in the victim's or rapist's home.[53] Another 15 percent occur in automobiles.[54] Car rapes are especially likely to involve participants who are intimate.

In addition, the rapist and his victim are generally of the same race and age: 90 percent of all reported rapes are intraracial, not interracial, occurrences.[55] One reason the myth dies hard that black men rape white women is because these cases frequently receive the most publicity. In a study of rape in Philadelphia, it was discovered that the two major newspapers, when they reported on rape cases, mentioned mainly interracial offenses. Intraracial rapes were only occasionally mentioned.[56]

The myth also survives that most rapes are spontaneous. However, statistics compiled from reported rapes show that the overwhelming majority are planned. In one study, 71 percent of all reported rapes were prearranged, and another 11 percent were partially planned. Only 18 percent were impulsive acts.[57] Planning is most common in cases of group rape, but, even when the rapist is acting alone, a majority of the rapes involve some manipulations on the part of the offender to place his victim in a vulnerable situation that he can exploit.

It is often assumed that the rapist had no prior intent to commit rape but was overcome by the sexual provocations of his victim. The conventional scenario is one of a man who is sexually aroused by a seductive woman. But the image of the rape victim as seductive and enticing is also at odds with reality. Rapes have been committed on females as young as six months and as old as ninety-three years. Most victims tend to be very young. In Amir's study, 20 percent were between ten and fourteen; another 25 percent were between fifteen and nineteen.[58] According to data compiled in 1974 by Women Organized Against Rape, 41 percent of rape victims seen in hospital emergency rooms in Philadelphia were sixteen or younger. The category with the highest frequency of victims was the range between thirteen and sixteen years old.[59]

Most convicted rapists tend to project the blame on others, particularly the victim. Schultz found that the sex offender is twice as likely to insist on his innocence as the general offender.[60] "In two-thirds of the cases one hears, 'I'm here on a phoney beef,' or 'I might have been a little rough with her but she was asking for it,' or 'I might have done it but I was too drunk to remember'."[61] They also rationalize the act by labeling their victims "bad" women.

The amazing thing is that the offender's view of the situation and of his victim is not very far removed from the view held by society in general. Just as the rapist blames his victim, so do the police, prosecutors, judges, juries, friends, and relatives.

Women have often complained that their veracity is in question when they report charges of rape. The first public agency with which a woman makes contact when she reports a rape is usually the police department, and it has often been less than sympathetic to rape complaints. Some officers have actually asked victims questions such as, "How many orgasms did you have?" and "Didn't I pick you up last week for prostitution?"[62] A 1971 California police textbook, *Patrol Procedure*, begins its discussion on sexual assaults with the statement, "Forcible rape is one of the most falsely reported crimes."[63]

The police have considerable discretion in determining whether a crime has been committed. In 1976, according to the FBI, 19 percent of all forcible rapes reported to the police were unfounded.[64] *Unfounding* simply means that the police decide not to advise prosecution.

A study conducted in 1966 of the procedures used by the Philadelphia Police

Department in unfounding rape cases discovered that one of the major factors for the unfounding of a case was the moral appraisal of the victim by the police. For example, if the woman had been drinking, police in most instances dismissed her charges.[65] Police were also most likely to unfound cases involving black participants and least likely to do so when victim and offender were both white.[66] In a more recent study in a large midwestern city, involving an analysis of 905 sexual assault complaints over a six-year period, it was found that police practices have become less discriminatory. But when police felt the victim had been guilty of "misconduct," they still were reluctant to pursue charges.[67]

According to many studies, one of the most frequent causes of unfounding rape is a prior relationship between the participants. In the Philadelphia study, 43 percent of all date rapes were unfounded. The police, according to the researcher, seemed to be more concerned that the victim had "assumed the risk" than they were with the fact that she had not given consent to intercourse.[68]

Another common reason police unfound cases is the apparent lack of force in the rape situation. The extent of injuries seems to be even more important in the decision to unfound than whether the offender had a weapon.[69] There is no requirement that a businessman must either forcibly resist when mugged or forfeit protection under the law. But proof of rape, both to the police and in court, is often in the form of resistance, and resistance is substantiated by the extent of injuries suffered by the victim. Yet local police departments frequently advise women not to resist if faced with the possibility of rape.

> In a confusion partially of their own making, local police precincts point out contradictory messages: they "unfound" a rape case because, by the rule of their own male logic, the woman did not show normal resistance; they report on an especially brutal rape case and announce to the press that the multiple stab wounds were the work of an assailant who was enraged because the woman resisted.[70]

In other words the victim is told that if she was raped it was because she did not resist enough. But if she fights back and is raped and otherwise assaulted, police blame her again for bringing about her own injuries because of her resistance.

The number of unfounded rapes is probably underestimated because of police practices. Police may turn away a complaint and not file an incident report at all. Or rape complaints may be categorized as "investigations of persons"—a catchall for incidents requiring an investigation report but for which there is insufficient information for classification into other crime categories. If further investigation confirms police doubts and the case is closed, then the incident is not recorded as an unfounded rape complaint. Because of these police practices, one author estimates that the FBI's 19 percent unfounding rate is far too low and that the true figure is probably at least 50 percent.[71] Other investigators who have interviewed police personnel have found from their comments that the police believe 80 percent to 90 percent of the rapes reported to them are not really rapes. In addition, the Philadelphia study found that the prosecutor's office was even less likely than the police to believe that the victim had been forced against her will to have intercourse.[72]

Police and prosecuting practices that are demeaning to rape victims have been criticized in the past decade, and there are indications that some changes are being made. A study in 1974, for example, found that about half of the police departments surveyed had, in the last three years, instituted some innovations in their methods of handling rape cases—notably in providing specialized training to officers or in assigning women to investigate.[73] In 1975, however, after a fifteen-month nationwide investigation, the U.S. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration concluded that the response by police, prosecutors, and hospitals toward rape victims is "generally poorly coordinated and inadequate."[74] Studies continue to find that "the credibility of the rape victim is questioned more than that of any other victims of crime."[75] In 1976 almost half of the prosecutors' offices surveyed in a national study admitted using polygraph examinations in many instances because they suspected that the alleged rape victim was lying.[76]

For many women, the experience of having their account of the events scrutinized, mocked, or discounted continues in the courtroom. Women have often said they were made to feel that they, not the defendants, were the persons on trial. According to Burgess and Holmstrom, "Going to court, for the victim, is as much of a crisis as the actual rape itself."[77] They quote one victim shortly after she appeared in district court:

> I felt like crying. I felt abused. I didn't like the questions the defense was asking. I felt accused—guilty till proven innocent. I thought the defense lawyer made it a big joke.[78]

They relate how one twelve-year-old girl had a psychotic breakdown during the preliminary court process.[79]

The victim, by taking the case to court, incurs extensive costs, both psychological and financial. Expecting to testify just once, she is likely to have to repeat her story at the hearing for probable cause, to the grand jury, and in superior court sessions. To convey the discomfort of such a process, feminists have recommended that individuals imagine having to tell an audience all of the details of their last sexual experience.

Financially, the time away from work nearly always stretches beyond expectations. According to Burgess and Holmstrom, the victims they accompanied to court were often forced to sit three and four hours in the courthouse, only to be told that the case had been continued. After they and their witnesses had taken time off from work and, in some cases, traveled great distances, they were less enthusiastic about the idea of seeing justice done.[80] Wood has said, "Due to the traumatic experience which a victim must go through in order to attempt to secure the attacker's successful prosecution, it is amazing any rape cases come to trial."[81]

Rape is different from ordinary criminal cases in that special rules of evidence may be used in court.[82] The one issue with which the courts are concerned is not whether intercourse took place but whether there was consent at the moment of coitus.[83] However, in order to convict on the charge of rape, the courts have generally deemed that the word of the complainant against that of the defendant is not sufficient evidence for conviction. Instead, many states require corroboration.

A corroboration rule requires that the testimony of the victim be supported by independent "inculpatory" evidence before a jury may consider that the testimony supports a guilty verdict.[84] While the corroboration rule has been criticized, it is still used in many states in rape cases.

> Although most jurisdictions still pay lip service to the common law rule which permits a conviction based upon the uncorroborated testimony of the complainant, corroboration is usually required whenever the testimony is incredible, contradictory, or improbable. Moreover, several states have, by statute, required corroboration in all rape cases; a number of others have required it in special circumstances; and still others do not require it, but prefer it.[85]

Nothing comparable to the restrictions on evidence in rape cases exists elsewhere in criminal law, even when similar circumstances have been present. There is no corroboration required, for example, for physical assault, a crime as likely as rape to take place without the presence of witnesses.[86] In addition, while assault is an offense that is equally subject to intentional falsification, assault charges lack many of the problems that accompany rape accusations. The corroboration rule has meant that, in some states, conviction for rape is practically impossible to obtain. In 1971, for instance, before New York amended its corroboration statute, New York City had 2,415 "founded" rape complaints but only 18 cases that resulted in conviction.[87] As LeGrand has stated, "Juries exist, after all, to decide whose testimony is most credible, and they are instructed to convict only if satisfied of the accused's guilt. There should be no special rules for rape."[88]

Whether a state has a corroboration requirement or not is usually beside the point, however, since juries frequently introduce extraordinary rules of evidence in rape cases. Kalven and Zeisel conducted an analysis of jurors' reactions to many crimes, including rape, in over 3,500 trials. They found that in rape cases the jury does not consider solely the issue of consent during intercourse but also includes as relevant to conviction any suggestions of contributory behavior on the part of the victim.[89] In a sense juries have created an extralegal defense. If the complainant somehow "assumed the risk" of rape, juries will commonly find the defendant guilty of some lesser crime or acquit him altogether.[90] "A seventeen-year-old girl was raped during a beer-drinking party. The jury *probably acquitted,* according to the judge, because they thought the girl asked for what she got."[91] In one case, according to Medea and Thompson, "a woman who responded with 'Fuck-off' when approached lost her case because 'fuck' is a sexually exciting word."[92] If the victim knew the offender previously, especially as an intimate, juries will be reluctant to convict.

> In one case of "savage rape," the victim's jaw was fractured in two places. The jury nevertheless acquitted because it found that there may have been sexual relations on previous occasions, and the parties had been drinking on the night of the incident.[93]

Defense attorneys often attempt to get acquittals for their defendants by tarnishing the image of the victim in the eyes of the jury. A woman "may be asked whether she wears a bra, whether she frequents bars, whether she enjoys sexual intercourse. The purpose, of course, is to create the impression that she consented to—or encouraged—the rapist."[94] In some states the complainant's past sexual conduct can be introduced in the trial but not the defendant's, even if he has been guilty of past sexual offenses.[95] It is argued that, if a woman has in the past consented to sexual relations outside of marriage, she is probably more likely to have consented to any resulting sexual relationships. An "unchaste" woman is also presumed to be of low moral character and thus more likely to lie. Needless to say, it is impossible, according to police and prosecutors, for a prostitute to be raped.

As a consequence of these practices, rape is a crime that is very rarely punished. In reported rape cases where police *do* believe the victim, only about half of the rape offenders are actually arrested. Even if the police catch up with an accused rapist, however, he is unlikely to be convicted. In 1976, for example, of all adult men arrested in rape cases, only 67 percent were prosecuted for rape, and of these, 49 percent were acquitted or had the charges dismissed, while another 9 percent were found guilty of lesser offenses. Even though they constitute a large proportion of offenders, juveniles were even more likely to be treated leniently by the courts, with only 20 percent of those arrested being officially charged with forcible rape.[96] In some jurisdictions, the conviction rate, based on arrests, is only 3 percent.[97]

Using FBI statistics, LeGrand calculated that

> a man who rapes a woman who reports the rape to police has roughly seven chances out of eight of walking away without any conviction. Assuming only one woman in five reports the rape, his chances increase to 39 out of 40. If these figures take into account the high percentage of those who receive probation or suspended sentences, his chances of escaping incarceration are in the vicinity of 98 to 99 out of 100. Forcible rape has a lower conviction rate than any other crime listed in the *Uniform Crime Reports*.[98]

Most individuals convicted of rape serve a sentence of no longer than four years, except when the victim is white and the offender is black. Of the 455 men executed for rape from 1930 to 1967, 405 were black.[99] Black males, however, do not uniformly receive the most severe punishment. If their victims are black females, they are likely to receive the most lenient sentences. According to a study of rape convictions in Baltimore in 1967: "Of the four categories of rapist and victim in a racial mix, blacks received the stiffest sentences for raping white women and the mildest sentences for raping black women."[100]

There is a bias in the criminal justice system against rape complaints that seems to be based on the fear that women frequently accuse innocent men of rape. This position is sometimes stated explicitly, for example, in this comment in the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review:*

> Women often falsely accuse men of sexual attacks to extort money, to force marriage, to satisfy a childish desire for notoriety, or to attain personal revenge. Their motives include hatred, a sense of shame after consenting to illicit intercourse, especially when pregnancy results, and delusion.[101]

Many states still allow judges to include in the jury charge a version of the "Hale instructions": "Rape is an accusation easily made and hard to be proved, and harder to be defended by the party accused, though never so innocent."[102]

These kinds of attitudes, however, are not limited to the legal profession. The general public believes that "a woman with her skirt up can run faster than a man with his pants down," and medical experts argue that "rape cannot be perpetrated by *one man* alone on an adult woman of good health and vigor."[103] The famous sexologist Alfred Kinsey has stated that the only difference between a rape and a good time depends on whether the girl's parents were awake when she finally got home.[104]

The claim that women easily make false accusations of rape is refuted even by the FBI. According to the *Uniform Crime Report*, "Even with the advent of rape crisis centers and an improved awareness by police dealing with rape victims, forcible rape, a violent crime against the person, is still recognized as one of the most underreported of all Index crimes."[105] Medea and Thompson discovered that 70 percent of the women in their sample did not report the crime.[106] A number of studies have estimated that only 20 percent of all forcible rapes are reported to authorities.

The disbelief of judges, juries, police, and prosecutors that a rape victim faces is compounded by the distrust she encounters from family and friends when she admits she has been raped. Responses of parents, relatives, friends, and spouses are either anger at the victim for being foolish enough to get raped or anger at the rapist for the humiliation and shame that family members will suffer as a result of the attack.

Burgess and Holmstrom recorded three responses from parents of child victims of rape:

1. Blaming the assailant—"If we ever find out who did it, there won't be enough left to pick him up if I see him."
2. Blaming the child—"We have her on punishment for one month. She can't go out and see any of her friends. Only one friend she can telephone and no friends permitted in the house. This is because of what happened."
3. Blaming themselves—"My wife is not well and says she is going to commit suicide. She says she is not good as a mother and wants to kill herself. What should I do?"[107]

Facing disbelief on every side, victims do blame themselves. In fact, much of the psychological discomfort suffered by women who have been raped stems from their belief that they were in part responsible for their own sexual violation. Women frequently ask themselves why they let it happen. "There is a strong desire for the victim to try and think of how she could undo what has happened. She reports going over in her mind how she might have escaped from the assailant, how she might have handled the situation differently."[108] For many women the aftermath of the rape is worse than the physical pain of the actual rape. They are plagued by feelings of guilt, shame, loss of self-esteem, and humiliation. Many rapes go unreported because victims have been unjustifiably convinced that they were guilty of precipitating the attack.[109] This is even more probable in cases where the victim knows the offender. Some women have confessed that it was only when they were involved in more healthy relationships that they realized that their initial introduction into sex was rape.

The attitude of victims of rape can be characterized more as despair than as resentment or anger. They have been taught to assume the responsibility for male sexuality—and many have. When they are raped, they feel that they have failed and that they are at fault. Medea and Thompson have argued that many female rape victims feel like sentinels who fell asleep while on guard duty.

> The male is the aggressor, the soldier laying siege to the castle; the woman is the guardian of the gate, and defender of the sacred treasure. If the male forces his way in with a battering ram and captures the treasure, he has succeeded in his purpose. There is no cause for guilt or remorse. The woman, on the other hand, has failed in her purpose. She has allowed the treasure to be taken and feels herself to be at fault. She suffers from feelings of guilt, besides the feelings of violation, humiliation and defeat.[110]

In a rape culture, even the victims believe that men are naturally sexual aggressors. Their response to the rape is to blame themselves for not taking proper precautions rather than to demand a change in the behavior of men.

As long as sex in our society is construed as a dirty, low, and violent act involving domination of a male over a female, rape will remain a common occurrence. The erotization of male dominance means that whenever women are in a subordinate position to men the likelihood for sexual assault is great. We are beginning to see that rape is not the only way in which women are sexually victimized, and that other forms of sexual exploitation of women are rampant in our society.[111] Feminists have raised our consciousness about rape by developing rape crisis centers and other programs to assist victims and their families, reforming laws and challenging politicians, training professionals in medicine and the criminal justice system, and educating women and the general public on the subject. They are also enlightening us about pornography; sexual harassment on the job and in higher education; sexual exploitation in doctor, dentist, and therapist relations with patients; and sexual assault in the family, such as incest and rape in marriage.

Rape is the logical outcome if men act according to the "masculine mystique" and women act according to the "feminine mystique." But rape does not have to occur. Its presence is an indication of how widely held are traditional views of appropriate male and female behavior and how strongly enforced they are. Our society is a rape culture because it fosters and encourages rape by teaching males and females that it is natural and normal for sexual relations to involve aggressive behavior on the part of males. To see an end to rape, people must be able to envision a relationship between the sexes that involves sharing, warmth, and equality and to bring about a social system in which those values are fostered.

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NADEAN BISHOP

Abortion: The controversial choice

"Reproductive freedom" has been a major demand of the women's liberation movement for most of its existence, as well as one of its most controversial issues. In fact, whether or not reproductive freedom was even a women's rights issue was a subject of major debate at the 1967 national convention of the National Organization for Women, and the vote to include it in the Women's Bill of Rights cost NOW its conservative wing a year later.

Although reproductive freedom includes an entire gamut of issues, such as sex education, access to contraception, and an end to forced sterilization of poor and minority women, at its core is the question of abortion. Controversy over abortion preceded the women's movement by many years, and its resurgence as a contemporary issue was not initiated by feminists. The American Civil Liberties Union was the first national organization to support it publicly, in 1965, and the ACLU has sponsored the key court cases since then. National organizations to repeal abortion laws have developed independently of the feminist movement, but the issue has nonetheless become thoroughly identified as a feminist issue. Consequently, an argument that was originally expressed in terms of the right to privacy and medical safety is now primarily debated in terms of a woman's right to control her own body.

The result is that the pro and con sides do not speak to the same issue or from the same concerns. *Pro* does not mean pro-abortion; it means pro-choice. Many who would not choose to terminate a pregnancy of their own argue that every woman should have the right to choose when and under what circumstances she will bear a child. Birth control measures sometimes fail, victims of rape and incest must have some recourse, tests may show deformity of the embryo, or the number of children already born may be too many (and unwanted children may become neglected or beaten children). Regardless of the reasons, the choice should be that of the pregnant woman. It is her body and her right to make that choice. Society should not penalize her by forcing her to bear an unwanted child or to take the risk of an illegal abortion, which can usually be had only under medically unsafe conditions. From this perspective, reproductive freedom cannot be separated

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from any of the other women's rights issues; every woman must be free to determine her own life and she cannot do so with the fear of an unplanned, possibly unmanageable disruption for childrearing.

Those opposed are more concerned with the "right to life" than the "right to choose." They argue that life exists from conception and that "abortion forfeits the very basic right to life from which all other rights proceed."[1] Because this argument makes an as-yet-unproved assumption about when life begins, it is basically a religious argument and is highly identified with religious forces. Although the right to life has been strongly supported by fundamentalist Protestants and Orthodox Jews, the Catholic hierarchy (though not necessarily the laity) has been a major backer of efforts to ban or restrict abortion.

Thus it is worth comparing what the major religious faiths have to say, even though pro-choice advocates would say that any legislation that imposes a single interpretation of when life begins denies the religious freedom guaranteed by the First Amendment.

The testimony of Jewish Rabbi Balfour Brickner before a House subcommittee in March of 1976 provides a succinct history of the position of Judaism on abortion. Many Orthodox Jewish authorities advise against abortion except "when a woman is impregnated through rape or incest or when it is clear that continuation of pregnancy to birth would constitute a clear danger to the life and/or health of the mother." But the official position differs. "In Judaism, the fetus in the womb is not a person (lav nefesh hu) until it is born. . . . Thus there is no capital liability for foeticide. By this reckoning, abortion cannot be considered murder." This interpretation is made from the scriptural admonition in Exodus 21:22: "If a man strike, and wound a pregnant woman so that her fruit be expelled, but no harm befall her, then shall he be fined as her husband shall assess, and the matter placed before the judges." Talmudic commentators on this passage conclude that the one responsible "is not culpable for murder, since the unborn fetus is not considered a person."[2]

In direct contrast to the Jewish position that life begins at birth is the official pronouncement of the Roman Catholic church that life begins at the moment of conception. Thus, for the Roman Catholic hierarchy, any aborting of the fetus is condemned as murder. Pope John Paul II has maintained a hard line on abortion, asserting that the life of the fetus takes precedence over the life of the mother. The fetus is to be carried to term even if the pregnancy resulted from incest or rape and even if the life or mental health of the mother is in jeopardy.

It is startling in the light of theological rigidity and expected conformity that so many Catholics disagree with this official position. In a September 1981 survey by the firm of Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, commissioned by *Life* magazine, 61 percent of Catholic women polled agreed when asked: "On the whole, do you agree or disagree with those who feel that any woman who wants an abortion should be permitted to obtain it legally?" Protestant women agreed 69 percent of the time. Of those women who disagreed with this premise, 77 percent thought abortions should be legal for "a woman whose health is at risk," 62 percent for "a woman who has been raped," and 60 percent for "a woman who is carrying a fetus with a severe genetic defect." Of the whole sample, 92 percent, 88 percent, and 87 percent said abortion should be legal for these same reasons.[3] More than half the Catholic women who felt abortion was morally wrong nevertheless believed abortions should be legally available. The Yankelovich interviewers asked respondents if they themselves had had an abortion, and the same proportion of Catholic as Protestant women answered that they had. Of the white non-Hispanic Catholics and Protestants polled, 7 percent said that they had had abortions; three times as many (21 percent) nonwhites had had abortions.[4]

Catholic theologians have not always opposed abortion on the grounds that life begins with conception. Saint Jerome, translator of the Vulgate Bible, said in a letter to a female student, Algasis, "Seeds are gradually formed in the uterus, and it [abortion] is not reputed homicide until the scattered elements receive their appearances and members." Saint Augustine also said, "The law does not provide that the act [abortion] pertains to homicide, for there cannot yet be said to be a live soul in a body that lacks sensation when it is not formed in flesh and so not yet endowed with sense." Pope Gregory XIV in 1591 in the Codicis Juris Fontes returned to the practice of allowing abortions up to forty days, following the Aristotelian ruling on ensoulment, thus overturning the 1588 prohibition of abortion by Sixtus V.[5]

It was not until 1869 that the Catholic church, under Pope Pius IX, forbade all abortions. This dogma has been reaffirmed since, most strongly in the 1974 Declaration on Procured Abortion, which states: "The First Right of the Human Person is his life. Never, under any pretext, may a woman resort to abortion. Nor can one exempt women from what nature demands of them." This dogma is vehemently opposed by many Catholic women, such as Dr. Janet Furlong-Cahill, former professor at Saint Mary's, Notre Dame: "Such a stand is designed to leave woman at the mercy, not only of her biological makeup, but also at the mercy of a celibate hierarchy, who claim the right to damn her eternally if she uses methods such as artificial birth control, sterilization or abortion to protect herself against unwanted or dangerous pregnancies."[6]

Protestant denominations have a diversity of opinion regarding when life begins and whether abortion should be allowed. The testimony of Theressa Hoover, associate general secretary of the United Methodist church, before a House subcommittee may be taken as representative of the sentiments of many Protestants regarding abortion. Ms. Hoover stresses the strong Protestant tradition of "advocating individual responsibility in matters concerning family, sexuality, and community."[7] This belief is rooted in the teachings of Jesus, which admonish Christians to take responsibility for their own lives and make responsible personal decisions. The right to privacy and the autonomy of the individual are basic doctrines, which are violated by governmental interference in matters of family planning.

Protestants would almost universally choose the life of the mother over the life of the fetus. As Ms. Hoover expresses it:

> A woman suffering from heart disease, diabetes, or cancer, could suffer grave, if not fatal risks if she continued a pregnancy to term. And a woman who is the carrier of a genetic disease, such as sickle cell anemia or Tay-Sachs, which may be transmitted to the fetus,

should not be compelled to bear that fetus if she does not choose to after medical tests have confirmed that the fetus is affected. We cannot in good conscience force a woman who has been raped to carry the possible resulting pregnancy to term. To do so would be to totally disregard the anguish which women suffer in such circumstances.[8]

Leaders from eighteen religious persuasions, including Protestants, Jews, and Roman Catholics, joined in 1973 to found the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights to safeguard the option of legal abortion. The current crusade of RCAR is to counteract the anti-choice minority, headed by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Moral Majority, and the National Right to Life Committee. The stance of the RCAR is not pro-abortion but pro-choice, a position that parallels the one taken by the American Civil Liberties Union: "The union itself offers no comment on the wisdom or the moral implications of abortion, believing that such judgments belong solely in the province of individual conscience and religion."[9]

LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE STATUS OF ABORTION

On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court handed down two landmark decisions regarding abortion, *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. *Roe* is the anonymous label given a pregnant unmarried woman in a Texas case, and *Doe* is the name given a pregnant married woman, mother of three, in a Georgia referral. In both cases the Court voted seven to two in support of the right to privacy of the women involved. It found that neither Texas nor Georgia had established any "compelling state interest" to restrict abortions during the first trimester of pregnancy, and it limited the legal control a state could exert over abortions in the second trimester to measures to protect the health of the mother.

The ruling in *Roe v. Wade* surveyed medical, religious, moral, and historical material before concluding that the Fourteenth Amendment's protection of personal liberty "is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy."[10] Having decided this, the Supreme Court set different standards according to the trimester. During the first trimester abortion presents very little danger to the mother, and thus no state interference is warranted in the decision to terminate an unwanted pregnancy: it is a matter between the patient and her doctor. After the first trimester the state has the right to specify certain standards for the facilities where the abortion occurs, as well as for aftercare services in case of complications, which are more frequent during the second and third trimesters. But even then the state must not limit the reasons for which a woman may obtain an abortion.

In *Roe v. Wade* the Supreme Court declined to intervene in the theological debate on when life begins: "We need not resolve the difficult question of when life begins. When those trained in the respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy, and theology are unable to arrive at any consensus, the judiciary, at this point in the development of man's knowledge, is not in a position to speculate as to the answer."[11] Addressing the state's interest in the right of the fetus, the Court in *Roe v. Wade* concluded that the potential life is not itself a person, implying that it is not entitled to precisely the same Fourteenth Amendment guarantees as the pregnant woman but that the state has some interest in potentiality of life.[12] Thus, after viability, which usually occurs between the twenty-fourth and twenty-eighth weeks, at which point the fetus may have hope for "meaningful life outside the mother's womb," the state may regulate or even forbid abortion unless it is required to save the pregnant woman's life or mental health.

A history of earlier abortion legislation may put recent decisions in perspective. The restrictive provisions of the ruling for the final trimester echo the wording of all abortion laws in the United States for the hundred years prior to 1973. For the first two hundred years of American history, abortion before the first movement of the fetus was not considered a crime of any kind, and during colonial times, in keeping with the English common law, willful abortion of a quickened fetus was accounted a simple misdemeanor. In 1803 the British revised their criminal code and made abortion a crime, though with lesser penalties before quickening. Exceptions were normally made if the abortion was necessary to save the life of the pregnant woman. In the United States the first abortion legislation was not passed until 1821, and its was not until after the Civil War that most states created statutes superseding British common law. Thereafter the restrictive provisions applied.[13]

Liberalization of these restrictions was proposed in 1959 in the Model Penal Code of the American Law Institute. The ALI code said that a licensed physician could terminate a pregnancy (1) if the life or mental health of the mother was threatened; (2) if the child was likely to be born with "a grave, permanent, and irremediable mental or physical defect" (such as those caused by the drug thalidomide); or (3) if the woman became pregnant as a result of rape or incest. Colorado in 1967 was the first state to adopt this code for therapeutic abortion, twelve other states adopted variations of it in the ensuing years. The removal of nearly all legal controls on abortion followed in 1970 in four states: New York, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii.[14]

Georgia was one of the states adopting the ALI code, and the 1973 *Doe v. Bolton* case addressed its regulations. Georgia required that abortions be performed in hospitals approved by the Joint Commission on Accreditation, even though only 54 of its 159 counties had such hospitals. The court found this requirement invalid on the basis of lack of equal access as well as lack of compelling state interest. Also struck down were provisions requiring approval at all stages of pregnancy by two state-licensed physicians and a hospital review committee.

On June 15, 1983, the Supreme Court reaffirmed the *Roe* and *Doe* decisions in ruling some provisions of an Akron ordinance regulating abortion to be unconstitutional. In a 6-to-3 decision written by Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr., the Supreme Court ruled that second-trimester abortions may not be limited to performance in hospitals, since extensive experience shows that such abortions may be done as safely in a freestanding ambulatory surgical facility or in an outpatient clinic. Further, the Court ruled that governments may not impose a blanket provision "requiring the consent of a parent or person in loco parentis as a condition for abortion of an unmarried minor."[15]

The provision of the Akron ordinance that required the physician to inform the pregnant woman that "the unborn child is a human life from the moment of conception" violates "the Court's holding in *Roe v. Wade* that a state may not adopt one theory of when life begins to justify its regulation of abortions."[16] This was also unacceptable because it was seen as an "intrusion upon the discretion of the pregnant woman's physician."[17] A waiting period was also struck down, although the dissenting opinion written by Justice O'Connor argued forcefully that "the waiting period is surely a small cost to impose to insure that the woman's decision is well-considered in light of its certain and irreparable consequences on fetal life."[18]

The restrictive state laws struck down in *Akron* were just the latest moves in organized efforts to curtail legal abortions. In late 1976, Representative Henry Hyde (R-Ill.) attached an anti-abortion amendment to the 1977 Labor/HEW Appropriations Act. This amendment prohibited the use of Medicaid money to pay for abortions "except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term."[19] On October 22 of that year, a federal judge in New York, John F. Dooling, Jr., issued a nationwide injunction against implementation, which the Supreme Court lifted on June 29, 1977.[20]

This drastic limitation on the federal support of Medicaid payments for abortion was strengthened by two rulings by the U.S Supreme Court on June 20, 1977. These rulings state that neither federal law nor the Constitution requires the states to pay Medicaid benefits for nontherapeutic abortions. By six to three the Court found that nothing in Title XIX of the Social Security Act or in the Constitution precluded a state from adopting a policy of favoring normal childbirth over abortion and using its public funds to further that policy.[21]

In deciding on the HEW appropriation for 1978, the Senate and House engaged in six months of rancorous debate over the wording of the proviso concerning the reimbursement of funds to states for Medicaid payments for abortion. On December 7, 1977, the night before funding for the Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare was due to expire, the Senate and House settled the impasse with this resolution:

> That none of the funds provided for in this paragraph shall be used to perform abortions except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term; or except for such medical procedures necessary for the victims of rape or incest which has been reported promptly to a law enforcement agency or public health service; or except in those instances where severe and long-lasting physical health damage to the mother would result if the pregnancy were carried to term when so determined by two physicians.[22]

The 1978 HEW report on family planning asserts that "by Labor Day 1977 half of the States had changed their Medicaid coverage for abortion to situations when the life of the mother was endangered."[23] A year later one-third of the states had not revised their guidelines, one-third were following federal policy, and one-third "were using their own funds to pay for all abortions for Medicaid-eligible women or were paying for all 'medically necessary' abortions defined broadly."[24]

In a 328-page decision discussing the Hyde Amendment's adverse impact on the health of poor women, Judge Dooling ruled on January 15, 1980, that a denial of Medicaid funds for medically necessary abortions violated the Constitution. He went on to rule that denying funds for therapeutic abortions violates a woman's religious freedom and further "impinges directly on the woman's right (of privacy) to decide, in consultation with her physician . . . to terminate her pregnancy in order to preserve her health."[25] Judge Dooling ordered the government to resume funding all such procedures, trusting the woman's physician to determine if the abortion was medically necessary "in light of physical, emotional, psychological, familial and age factors."[26] Two weeks later the Supreme Court in a five-to-four decision held that the Hyde Amendment does not violate the Constitution. It further ruled that Title XIX does not require a state to pay for medically necessary abortions not covered by the Hyde Amendment. As a result, the federal government is free to refuse funds for medically necessary abortions for poor women.[27]

The words of Justice Thurgood Marshall in his 1977 dissenting opinion apply equally well to the impact of this new decision:

> The enactments challenged here brutally coerce poor women to bear children whom society will scorn for every day of their lives. . . . I am appalled at the ethical bankruptcy of those who preach a "right to life" that means under present social policies, a bare existence in utter misery for so many poor women and their children. . . . Nonwhite women now obtain abortions at nearly twice the rate of whites and it appears that almost 40 percent of minority women—more than five times the proportion of whites—are dependent upon medicaid for their health care. . . . The effect will be to relegate millions of people to lives of poverty and despair.[28]

WHO GETS AN ABORTION?

The majority of women obtaining abortions over the last several years have characteristically been young, white, and unmarried. In 1980, 30 percent of abortions were obtained by women under twenty (with 1 percent under fifteen) with an additional 35 percent among women twenty to twenty-four.[29] (See table 1.) As a 1983 study of statistics by the Alan Guttmacher Institute shows, 70 percent of abortions in 1980 were for white women. Nonwhite women have twice as many abortions as white women (in 1980 the rate was 56.8 per thousand, compared with 24.3 for white women), but this simply reflects a higher fecundity rate. "When unintended pregnancies occurred, only a slightly higher proportion of nonwhites than whites chose abortion—47 percent and 41 percent, respectively."[30] In 1980, 79 percent of abortions were obtained by unmarried women, which includes never married, separated, divorced, and widowed.[31]

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reminds us that "this large difference in abortion ratios between married and unmarried women does not take into account those women who conceived premaritally and subsequently gave birth while married."[32] The percentage of pregnancies terminated by abortion among women in their teens was 41 percent, and 52 percent of women forty and over who became pregnant chose abortion rather than childbearing.[33]

The Guttmacher study indicates that "91 percent of abortions occurred within the first 12 weeks of gestation," and the incidence after twenty weeks is less than 1 percent.[34] Evidence is that the abortion rate may have leveled off in 1981 or

TABLE 1 Number and percentage distribution of legal abortions, abortion rate per 1,000 women, and percentage of pregnancies terminated by abortion, by age of woman, United States, selected years, 1974–80

Measure	1974	1977	1978	1979	1980
Number of abortions	898,570	1,316,700	1,409,600	1,497,670	1,553,890
Under 15	13,420	15,650	15,110	16,220	15,340
15–19	278,280	396,630	418,790	444,600	444,780
15–17	u	(165,610)	(169,270)	(178,570)	(183,350)
18–19	u	(231,020)	(249,520)	(266,030)	(261,430)
20–24	286,600	449,660	489,410	525,710	549,410
25–29	162,690	246,680	265,990	284,200	303,820
30–34	89,810	124,380	134,280	141,970	153,060
35–39	48,770	61,700	65,350	65,070	66,580
40 and over	19,000	22,000	20,670	19,900	20,900
Percentage distribution of abortions					
Under 15	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0
15–19	31.0	30.1	29.7	29.7	28.6
15–17	u	(12.6)	(12.0)	(11.9)	(11.8)
18–19	u	(17.5)	(17.7)	(17.8)	(16.8)
20–24	31.9	34.2	34.7	35.1	35.4
25–29	18.1	18.7	18.9	19.0	19.6
30–34	10.0	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.8
35–39	5.4	4.7	4.6	4.3	4.3
40 and over	2.1	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Stanley K. Henshaw and Kevin O'Reilly, "Characteristics of Abortion Patients in the U.S., 1979 and 1980," *Family Planning Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (Jan./Feb. 1983).

Note: u = unavailable.

1982, but "between 1974 and 1980, the number of abortions rose by 73 percent and the abortion rate increased by 52 percent."[35]

Typically, women from California, New York, and the District of Columbia have the highest abortion rates, and the lowest rates are from the Dakotas, Utah, and West Virginia.[36] In 1980, about 6 percent of women traveled out of their home state for abortions, often because of lack of services close by, and 27 percent went outside their home counties but stayed in their home states.[37]

Perhaps the most striking statistic, however, is that approximately 70 percent of the abortions obtained legally would have been obtained illegally before decriminalization, according to Dr. Christopher Tietze, senior fellow of the Population Center and an expert on the statistics and demographics of family planning.[38] The hazards of illegal abortions are chilling to contemplate. Of course there is no way of knowing the number of women who die from the unsanitary practices of back-alley abortionists, but the CDC report shows a drop from 320 known abortion-related fatalities in 1961 to 88 in 1972, to 44 in 1975 (including 18 from illegal abortions), and 20 in 1979 (with no deaths reported from illegal abortions).[39]

Measure	1974	1977	1978	1979	1980
Abortion rate[a]	19.3	26.4	27.7	28.8	29.3
Under 15[b]	6.4	7.6	7.5	8.3	8.4
15–19	26.9	37.5	39.7	42.4	42.9
15–17	u	(26.2)	(26.9)	(28.8)	(30.2)
18–19	u	(54.1)	(58.4)	(61.9)	(61.0)
20–24	30.4	44.3	47.2	49.9	51.4
25–29	19.6	26.9	28.4	29.6	30.8
30–34	13.0	15.7	16.4	16.5	17.1
35–39	8.4	9.8	9.8	9.4	9.3
40 and over[c]	3.3	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.5
Percentage of pregnancies terminated by abortions[d]	22.0	28.6	29.2	29.6	30.0[e]
Under 15	29.0	41.1	40.9	43.0	41.7
15–19		38.3	39.5	40.6	40.5
15–17	u	(38.7)	(39.7)	(41.3)	(41.7)
18–19	u	(37.9)	(39.3)	(40.1)	(39.6)
20–24	20.0	27.6	28.7	29.4	29.9
25–29	15.4	20.2	20.8	21.1	21.9
30–34	21.7	23.7	23.5	23.0	23.8
35–39	32.8	38.5	38.6	37.3	37.4
40 and over	44.4	52.5	51.6	50.4	51.7

[a] Denominator for total abortion rate is women aged 15–44.

[b] Numerator is abortions obtained by girls younger than fifteen; denominator is number of fourteen-year-old females.

[c] Numerator is abortions obtained by women forty and over; denominator is women aged forty to forty-four.

[d] Denominator is live births six months later (to match time of conception with abortions) and abortions. Pregnancies exclude miscarriages and stillbirths. Births and abortions are adjusted to age of woman at time of conception.

[e] Based on estimated age distribution of women giving birth in 1981.

The dominant alternative to abortion, bearing and keeping the unwanted baby, was chosen by 94 percent of teenage mothers. This choice has sometimes proved devastating for the child. Feminist attorney Jean King quotes a longitudinal study done in Göteborg, Sweden, by Norman and Nancy Polanski, tracing the cases of 120 women who were refused therapeutic abortions. Sixty-eight of the pregnant women found other avenues to abortion. Of the fifty-two babies born, fourteen died before age three. Twenty-two became juvenile offenders, compared with ten in the control group. They became not only community problems and victims, but victimizers as well. The study shows the same syndrome that we recognize with battered children: those who are mistreated as they grow up become parents who mistreat their own offspring. This multiplication of inhumanity could be stopped before it begins by providing readily available methods for terminating unwanted pregnancy.[40] A similar study of Czechoslovakian children whose mothers had twice been denied abortions found the unwanted children to have "poorer health and poorer grades in school and to be less accepted by their peers than other children of similar socioeconomic status, intellectual ability, birth order, and family size."[41]

WHERE AND HOW ARE ABORTIONS PERFORMED?

By 1979, 66 percent of all abortions were performed in freestanding clinics that provided counseling and contraceptive information in addition to abortions. Only 4 percent of abortions were supplied by private hospitals. The other 30 percent were done in public hospitals, only 20 percent of which do abortions. The fact that 95 percent of the clinics are in metropolitan centers makes it difficult for rural women to obtain abortions, especially since relatively few hospitals now provide the service.[42]

Spontaneous abortion occurs in one out of every fifteen pregnancies and has been called "nature's method of birth control" because it eliminates fetal and placental abnormalities. Induced abortions, whether required for therapeutic, socioeconomic, eugenic, contraceptive, or circumstantial reasons, have been practiced since ancient times. Gynecological instruments, such as probes, dilators, and forceps, were found in the ruins of Pompeii. During the Renaissance the physician of Queen Elizabeth I wrote of techniques to remove unwanted material from the uterus by the use of suction.[43]

Some form of suction and surgical curettage is used in 95 percent of abortions now being performed in the United States. This can range from menstrual regulation in the early weeks during which "neither anesthesia nor dilatation is required, through suction of the embryo through a flexible cannula," to the D & C in which the womb is scraped by a sharp instrument after vacuum evacuation. Only 0.1 percent of abortions involve hysterotomy (removing the fetus) or hysterectomy (removing the uterus). The remainder are forms of medical induction, usually injecting either saline or prostaglandin or a combination of the two into the womb.[44]

The changes in the place, number, and nature of abortions occasioned by the cutback of federal Medicaid funds is difficult to assess. The Alan Guttmacher Institute found "a much higher abortion rate . . . among low-income women eligible for Medicaid payments than among ineligible women."[45] The CDC showed that "about 238,000 or more than 80 percent of all Medicaid-eligible women who obtained abortions in FY [fiscal year] 1977 lived in states continuing to pay for these services, while 56,600 lived in states where public funding became unavailable for most abortions in FY 1978. . . . Three-fourths of the Medicaid-eligible women in the latter group of states were able to obtain abortions in the private sector."[46] Medicaid abortions in states where services were still available in 1978 dropped by 46,000, probably because of confusion about the funds. Patients typically had abortions 2.4 weeks later, increasing their risks greatly. According to a CDC spokeswoman in August 1982, the cutbacks have apparently not resulted in increased deaths due to illegal abortions.[47]

The money question is of great concern for many women who seek abortions. Abortions have always been available to women with money and influence, but no such possibility exists for the poor. Health insurance finances abortions for some women. "One survey of 37 private health insurance companies in the U.S. revealed that 29 offered coverage for all types of abortions; 27 would pay for services in a free-standing clinic, 31 in a doctor's office, and 32 for abortions performed in a hospital."[48] But many women do not have jobs that furnish health coverage. The Alan Guttmacher Institute estimates that "1.8 million women in 1978 wanted to terminate a pregnancy by abortion" but did not.[49]

ABORTION RISKS

What are the risks involved in modern abortion techniques? Abortions performed under medical supervision during the first trimester, which in 1978 was 91.4 percent of all abortions, offer very little risk compared with other medical practices. Eight times as many women die as a result of full-term pregnancies as from having legal abortions during the first trimester. The maternal death rate is 11.2 deaths per 100,000 live births and 111 deaths per 100,000 for caesarean sections, compared to 1.7 per 100,000 for first-trimester abortions. Even surgery for removal of tonsils and adenoids is three times as risky as legal abortion during the first twelve weeks. The mortality ratio goes down dramatically to 0.5 for these procedures occurring before the ninth week of gestation. As the gestation period increases, so does the risk. The jump is from 4.2 deaths at eleven to twelve weeks to 17 deaths per 100,000 abortions at sixteen to twenty weeks. This still is less than a quarter of the ratio for major surgery such as hysterotomy and hysterectomy, which have a combined mortality of 61.3 deaths per 100,000.[50]

Why would a woman wait until the second trimester? Studies have shown that such factors as ambivalence and objections on religious grounds are usually involved, combined with procedural delays and difficulties in getting counseling, the pregnancy test, or the money. Abortion is also necessary in the second trimester for mothers exposed to rubella virus infection, X rays, or the ingestion of drugs known to damage the fetus. A major factor, however, is that testing for almost sixty inherited metabolic disorders, such as Tay-Sachs disease or Down's syndrome, cannot occur until the second trimester. A testing technique called *amniocentesis,* which affords almost 100 percent accuracy, was performed in 15,000 second-trimester pregnancies during 1978, and 650 of the diagnoses showed an affected fetus.[51] Thus 650 sets of parents were saved the grief of a deformed baby, and 14,350 mothers were able to carry their healthy children to a normal birth.

Christopher Tietze describes the relative safety of abortions by showing the contrast with other methods of fertility management. If 300,000 women of childbearing age use no contraception for a year, approximately 120,000 to 180,000 conceptions would occur, yielding eighteen to thirty-six maternal deaths. If the 300,000 women use contraceptives at the present levels of effectiveness and aborted all unwanted conceptions (43,050), only one death would occur. If all the women used the most effective contraception methods now known and none had abortions, three of those women conceiving children would die.[52]

But what about the psychological effects of legal abortion? Since reliable measures of psychological states before abortion are unavailable, its effects are hard to gauge, but evidence over the last several years indicates that abortion does not cause any increase in mental illness. Some women with previous psychiatric illness have shown aggravated conditions following an abortion. But the Joint Program for the Study of Abortion survey showed only an estimated 0.2 to 0.4

cases of postabortion psychosis per 1,000 legal abortions, less than half the postpartum rate of 1 to 2 per 1,000 deliveries in the United States.[53]

BEYOND ABORTION

The range of right-to-life legislation recently under consideration in the U.S. Senate indicates the many attacks on abortion rights. Senator Orin Hatch (R-Utah) proposed a constitutional amendment, called the Human Life Federalism Amendment, stating that "the right to abortion is not secured by the Constitution, and conferring upon both Congress and the states concurrent jurisdiction to limit or ban abortion." A rider to this amendment was proposed that would grant states the authority to make abortion a crime. The Helms' Human Life Bill defines *person* in the Fourteenth Amendment to include the fetus from the moment of conception. This bill would also seek to prohibit all direct and indirect use of federal funds for anything related to abortion, including counselling, research and data collection, and training in abortion techniques.[54]

Abortion is the most controversial aspect of reproductive freedom, but it is not the only one. The report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the right to limit childbearing expresses it very well:

> Even when the legal right to reproductive choice—including the right to abortion—is secured, not all women can exercise that right equally. Thus, for example, the poor woman who might choose to bear a child may find that the lack of financial assistance, counseling, housing assistance, child care, and health and personal services afford her no alternative but to abort.[55]

The better world we look toward, in which women have a genuine freedom of choice, would thus be a world in which financial inequities would be alleviated.

Abortion alternative programs may help bring an end to some inequities. Early proposals include "better adolescent family planning clinics, greater incentives to states to encourage more sexual education in the classroom and incentives to encourage schools to allow teen-age mothers to enroll."[56]

Even anti-abortion campaigners seem willing to support options to abortion such as improved hospital conditions for maternity patients and medical insurance plans that cover all the costs of giving birth. Child-care facilities for the workers as well as for the very poor engage the energies of feminists and anti-abortionists alike. Reforms in adoption policies to counteract the black market atmosphere of the early seventies are under way, but adoption will never be the answer to the problem of more than a million unwanted babies.[57]

Feminists would go beyond these conservative attempts to overcome the inequities and injustices that make abortion attractive. Sex education, including fertility control information, must be legalized and required in all states to help reduce the thousands of pregnancies resulting from ignorance. Contraceptives should be provided through low-cost clinics in every community, along with pregnancy testing without parental knowledge or a doctor's order.

A world in which abortion is not the only answer would be one in which a woman's freedom of sexual expression would be accepted as a right, and one in which a woman without a man could bear and raise a child without social stigma.

Financial support would be available for those unwed mothers who choose to bring up their children instead of giving them up for adoption. Most of all, control over our bodies means we would not be forced by social conditioning or economic pressures to violate our own best interest. Punishment for freedom must never become the norm.

Until this ideal state is achieved, however, feminists will continue to work toward retaining the option of abortion as a court of last resort. As Bella Abzug put it for all of us:

> I am opposed to compulsory abortion. I am opposed to compulsory sterilization. I am also opposed to compulsory pregnancy. Under the Supreme Court decision, no woman anywhere in the United States can be forced to have an abortion. Neither can she be forced to have a baby. She is free to decide, under certain limitations specified by the Supreme Court, whether she should give birth to a child. We are all concerned with the right to life. We must also be concerned with preserving the essence of our democratic society which allows all viewpoints to flourish and compete for support.[58]

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SUSAN EHRLICH MARTIN

Sexual harassment: The link between gender stratification, sexuality, and women's economic status

While jokes about the producer, the starlet, and the casting couch or about the secretary taking dictation on the boss's lap have long been part of our social lore, serious consideration of sexual harassment as a feminist issue is in its infancy. Until recently, if sexual harassment received any attention, it tended to be regarded as an individual problem, either a not-too-serious matter brought on by the woman of dubious virtue whose demeanor or attire "asked for it" or a complaint initiated by a woman as an illegitimate way to get ahead on the job. Until 1976, when the term *sexual harassment* apparently first came into use, the phenomenon was literally unspeakable (MacKinnon 1979). Since that time there has been a growing recognition of its pervasiveness and its negative consequences, as well as an emerging view that it is a serious social problem. Moreover, sexual harassment has been prohibited by the federal courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as an illegal form of sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Understanding sexual harassment requires recognizing that it is central to maintaining women's subordinate social, economic, and sexual statuses and thus is closely related to other feminist issues. Along with rape, wife beating, prostitution, and pornography, it is one of the ways in which male control of women's sexuality shapes women's experience.

This article reviews recent studies of the nature and extent of sexual harassment, analyzes its meaning from a feminist perspective, and examines the responses of individuals to the harassment experience. It also examines the government's responses to the issue through the development of case law and public policy.

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DEFINITIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Various definitions of sexual harassment have been proposed. For example, Safran (1976:149) defined it as "sex that is one-sided, unwelcome, or comes with strings attached"; Farley (1978:14–15) called it "unsolicited, nonreciprocal male behavior that asserts a woman's sex role over her functioning as a worker"; a survey by New Responses, Inc. (1979:2) defined it as behavior that makes an individual feel that her employment situation will in some way suffer unless sexual demands are met. The definition of sexual harassment applicable throughout the federal civil service is "deliberate or repeated unsolicited verbal comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature which are unwelcome" (U.S. House of Representatives 1980:8). What is common to these definitions is that sexual harassment (1) is physical or verbal behavior that is sexual in nature (i.e., it makes the victim's sex salient over her occupational or other statuses); (2) is unwanted; and (3) implicitly or explicitly is experienced as a threat to the woman's job or ability to perform her work or educational activities.[1]

Problems arise in defining and identifying incidents of sexual harassment because harassing behavior is not always clearly different from other acts. The same action, such as a man's putting an arm around a woman's shoulder, may be regarded by its recipient either as intentionally offensive or as a friendly gesture and may be welcome or repugnant depending on the woman's interpretation of the man's intentions, her view of him, and the situation.[2]

Several types of sexual harassment have been identified. MacKinnon (1979) distinguishes between *quid pro quo harassment* and *harassment as a continuing condition of work.* Quid pro quo harassment involves a more or less explicit exchange: a woman must comply sexually or forfeit an employment or educational benefit. In such instances the harasser tends to be an employer, supervisor, or teacher because his power to punish or reward rests on his occupational status. Male coworkers, classmates, and clients, however, may use informal authority in the work or academic setting or the power to give or withhold business or sales in order to harass. Quid pro quo harassment situations involve three elements: an advance, a response, and a consequence. Four different outcomes are possible: (1) an employer or instructor makes an advance, the woman declines it, and she is punished; (2) the employer or instructor makes an advance, the woman complies, but she does not receive the promised benefit; (3) the employer or instructor makes an advance, the woman complies, and she gains the benefit; (4) the employer or instructor makes an advance, the woman declines, and she receives no subsequent harassment or reprisal. Although each situation involves harassment, all successful legal cases against quid pro quo harassment have dealt with the first type.

Sexual harassment may also occur as a condition of work. Such harassment rarely involves outright sexual demands but includes a variety of behaviors, such as touching, teasing, and comments about a woman's appearance or sexuality; these require no response but make the woman's work environment unpleasant. Often such harassing behavior is less blatant or threatening than quid pro quo harassment, is condoned by management, and is regarded as "normal" male behavior or as an extension of the male prerogative of initiation in male–female interaction. For these reasons women often do not define such behavior as sexual harassment and, when they do, tend to be more reluctant to make formal complaints about it than about quid pro quo harassment.

Loy and Stewart (n.d.) identify four types of harassment along two dimensions: its form (whether it is verbal or physical) and the level of coerciveness involved and the response required (whether it requires only tolerance by the woman or evokes reciprocation or resistance). The four types are verbal commentary, which includes sexual messages delivered through teasing, off-color jokes, and animal sounds; verbal negotiation, which includes explicit sexual propositions and negotiation; manhandling, which includes unwanted touching, such as patting, brushing against, or pinching; and sexual assault, which involves the use of physical force.

SURVEY FINDINGS REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Knowledge is still limited about the frequency of various types of sexual harassment, the characteristics of victims and harassers, the conditions under which it occurs, its psychological and physical effects on the victims, and their responses to it. Most of the early studies involved nonrandom surveys with self-selected respondents, lacked a standard definition of sexual harassment, failed to specify the time period within which the respondent was to answer, and provided evidence that was stark but impressionistic rather than scientific (Safran 1976; Carey 1977; Kelber 1977; Silverman 1976–77). Several recent studies have used random samples that permit more conclusive statistical analyses of the distribution of harassing behavior (Loy and Stewart, n.d.; Gutek et al. 1980; Gutek 1981; MSPB 1981; Benson and Thomson 1982). Loy and Stewart surveyed a random probability sample of 304 female and 203 male adult residents of Connecticut; Gutek et al., in 1980, pilot-tested interviews with 399 men and women, and subsequently (1981), Gutek interviewed 405 men and 827 women in the Los Angeles area using a random-digit-dialing selection procedure; Benson and Thomson sent questionnaires to a random sample of 400 female students in their senior year at the University of California at Berkeley and got 269 responses. The study by the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) involved a stratified random sample of more than twenty-three thousand civilian employees of the executive branch of the federal government and thus provides the fullest and most reliable picture of sexual harassment to date.[3]

Extent of Sexual Harassment

In the early studies estimates of the proportion of women experiencing sexual harassment on the job were so high that *Redbook* observed: "The problem is not epidemic; it is pandemic—an everyday, everywhere occurrence" (Safran 1976:217). Recent studies support this conclusion. The MSPB study found that 42 percent of the female federal employees had experienced some form of sexual harassment in the workplace during the previous two years. One percent of the women in the sample were victims of actual or attempted rape or sexual assault (hereafter referred to as *rape/assault*); 29 percent experienced "severe sexual harassment" (including unwanted letters, phone calls, or materials of a sexual nature; unwanted pressure for sexual favors; or unwanted touching, pinching, or being leaned over or cornered); and 12 percent were victims of "less severe sexual harassment" (including unwanted pressure for dates; unwanted suggestive looks or gestures; or unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions) (MSPB 1981:34–38).

Loy and Stewart (n.d.:table 3) found that almost half (49.8 percent) of the women surveyed had experienced at least one type of sexual harassment, with 37 percent reporting commentary harassment, 26 percent manhandling, 7 percent negotiation harassment, and 2 percent assault.

Benson and Thomson (1982:241) found that about 30 percent of the Berkeley seniors who responded had personally experienced at least one incident of sexual harassment during their college career, although a larger proportion knew of incidents involving someone else and agreed that such occurrences are not rare. These incidents tended to take the form of gradual inducements not overtly linked to grades or immediate sexual obligations. Instead, instructors displayed friendliness and offered extra help and flexible deadlines, which laid the groundwork for subsequent overtures.

Victim Characteristics

Women of all backgrounds and in all positions have been victims of harassment, although a woman's age, marital status, and education affect the likelihood of harassment. The MSPB found that the rate of harassment was directly proportional to the youth of the victim. Twice as many women between sixteen and nineteen years of age (67 percent) reported being harassed as did women between forty-five and fifty-four (33 percent) (MSPB 1981:43). More single (53 percent) and divorced (49 percent) women reported harassment than married (37 percent) and widowed women (31 percent). Surprisingly, harassment was found to increase with the woman's education. The higher victimization rate of the more educated female employees appears to be related both to the difference in their attitudes (i.e., they defined more behaviors as harassment) and to their presence in nontraditional jobs (MSPB 1981:44). The race and ethnic background of the victim, however, made virtually no difference (MSPB 1981:44–45).

Organizational Characteristics

A number of organizational characteristics were also found by the MSPB study to be related to sexual harassment, including agency, job classification, traditionalism of the job, sex of the victim's supervisor, and sexual composition of the victim's work group. Incidence of harassment varied by federal agency, ranging from 56 percent in the Department of Labor to 31 percent in the Department of Agriculture (MSPB 1981:47). The job classification of the victim showed modest relationship to victimization. The highest frequency of harassment occurred among trainees (51 percent reported harassment), which may be related both to their age and to their relative powerlessness on the job. Of the women in professional and technical positions, 41 percent reported harassment; in clerical positions, 40 percent; and in blue-collar jobs, 38 percent (MSPB 1981:50). It is noteworthy that 53 percent of the women in nontraditional jobs but only 41 percent in traditional jobs reported unwanted sexual attention on the job (MSPB 1981:51). Women with a male supervisor were somewhat more likely to be sexually harassed (45 percent) than those with a female supervisor (38 percent). In addition, the male–female ratio of the work group was strongly related to harassment: the greater the proportion of men in the work group the more likely the women were to be harassed: 55 percent of those who work in virtually all-male groups and 49 percent of those in predominantly male groups were subjected to harassment; 37 percent in predominantly female and only 22 percent in all-female work groups were victims of harassment (MSPB 1981:52). This may be related both to the statistically greater number of men in jobs that are nontraditional for women and to deliberate harassment by men as an expression of resentment of the presence of women in these jobs. Differences among salaries and grade levels and by region were minor, as were several other organizational characteristics, including privacy on the job, length of federal service, work schedule, typical working hours, and the size of the immediate work group (MSPB 1981:52–54).

The Harassers

The typical harasser of federal female employees was a male coworker who was married, older than the victim, of the same race or ethnic background, and likely to have harassed others at work, according to the descriptions of the victims. Of the women who reported being harassed (and described the incident in some detail), 79 percent indicated that the harasser was a lone man; 16 percent reported that the incident involved two or more men; 2 percent said the incident involved both male and female harassers; and 3 percent said they were harassed by one or more women. In 37 percent of the cases women reported harassment by an immediate or higher level supervisor; 65 percent were bothered by a coworker or other federal employee with no supervisory authority over the victim; and only 4 percent were bothered by a subordinate (MSPB 1981:59–60). (Since some respondents reported that more than one person had harassed them, these figures total more than 100 percent.) For the victim of rape/sexual assault, however, the supervisor was the perpetrator in 51 percent of the cases.

Loy and Stewart report somewhat different proportions of harassment by coworkers and supervisors. They found that 48 percent of the women reporting harassment had been victimized by an immediate or higher level supervisor, and 50 percent reported harassment by a coworker (Loy and Stewart, n.d.:table 8).

Effects of Sexual Harassment on Victims

Sexual harassment has psychological, social, and physical effects on its victims. Like rape victims, sexually harassed women feel humiliated, ashamed, and angry. In one survey in which women could report more than one reaction, 78 percent reported feeling angry, 48 percent were upset, 23 percent were frightened, and an additional 27 percent mentioned feeling alienation, aloneness, helplessness, guilt, or some other emotion. Only 7 percent reported feeling indifference (Silverman 1976–77). The harassed women tended to feel the incident was their fault and that they were individually responsible as well as demeaned. Some have reported strained relations with men, including their husbands, as a result of the harassment (Safran 1976; Lindsey 1977). Others reported developing physical symptoms and attitude changes, including loss of ambition and self-confidence and a negative view of their work (Safran 1976; Silverman 1976–77; New Responses, Inc. 1979). A third of all the victims—and 82 percent of the victims of rape/assault—reported suffering emotional or physical consequences (MSPB 1981:81).

Sexual harassment also had harmful effects on female students. It disrupted the process of intellectual development and caused confusion, uncertainty, self-doubt, and distrust of male faculty in general (Benson and Thomson 1982:246–47). It also led to feelings of helplessness—that nothing was likely to be done about a complaint, that the student was not likely to be believed when a tenured professor denied a complaint, and that she would be labeled a "troublemaker" or suffer reprisal in the form of lowered grades and poor recommendations.

While there is no way to estimate costs to individual victims, the MSPB estimated that the sexual harassment of women cost the federal government $101 million. This figure encompasses the costs of job turnover, including the costs of offering a job, doing background checks, and training new employees; dollar losses due to emotional and physical stress, measured in terms of increased use of governmental health benefit plans; and dollar losses due to absenteeism and lost individual and work-group productivity over a two-year period (MSPB 1981:77).

ANALYSIS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is traditionally explained as either biologically based, "natural" behavior or the idiosyncratic personal proclivity of a minority of men. One variation of this traditional perspective assumes that the human sex drive is stronger in men, leading them to act in sexually aggressive ways toward women. Another variation maintains that men and women are naturally attracted to each other and therefore inevitably engage in sexually oriented behavior in the workplace. A third variation suggests that sexually harassing behavior stems from the personal peculiarities of isolated, highly sexed individuals. What these variations have in common is their denial that sexual harassment at work has the intent or effect of discriminating against women or that it reduces their chances to achieve social equality.

This traditional approach has several notable shortcomings. Most important is the failure to see that men and women are gender groups that are socialized into learned sex roles and work behaviors. Sexual behavior, like other kinds of social behavior, is learned, shaped by social rules and norms, and best understood in a social rather than an isolated individual context. Most individuals can and do control their impulses, in conformity with existing social rules. In addition, the traditional view trivializes the problem of sexual harassment by asserting that such behavior is "normal" or that it is futile to try to change human nature, thereby making any systematic effort to remedy the problem hopeless.

A feminist approach to sexual harassment views it as the use of power derived from the economic or occupational sphere to gain benefits or impose punishments in the sexual sphere. Thus, economic inequality (i.e., the employer's control of workers) and sexual inequality (i.e., men's dominance over and control of women) reinforce each other to undercut women's potential for social equality in two interlocking ways. Women's confinement to dead-end, low-paying, sex-typed jobs and their subordination to male supervisors, employers, and instructors make them systematically vulnerable to sexual coercion. At the same time the sex-role expectations of women as wives, mothers, and sex objects get carried into the workplace and are used to coerce women economically.

Women in the Occupational System

Women's place in the occupational world is characterized by (1) lower pay than men on the average and lower pay for doing the same job; (2) subordination to male supervisors and dependence on their goodwill and approval for getting, keeping, and advancing on a job; and (3) concentration in sex-typed occupations considered appropriate for women with limited opportunities for mobility into other types of work or up a career ladder. Limited alternatives and subordination to male supervisors make it difficult for female workers to reject sexual advances by males in positions of authority. Occupational segregation contributes to the sexual harassment of women employed in both traditionally "female" and traditionally "male" jobs through a phenomenon termed *sex-role spillover* (Gutek and Morash 1982). Sex-role spillover occurs when gender-based expectations for behavior get carried into the workplace, so that workers in their work roles are expected to behave as males or females.

"Women's jobs" not only offer low pay, little prestige, and routine tasks, but they also require women to serve, emotionally support, and be sexually attractive to men. Thus their jobs are extensions of the female sex role into the workplace. The secretary, for example, is the "office wife," who, in addition to performing her official duties, is expected to make coffee, run her boss's personal errands, and maintain his sense of masculinity through flattery and deference (Kanter 1977). Similarly, the scanty attire required of some waitresses and the former requirement that airline stewardesses be unmarried and younger than thirty years old indicate that female sexuality is an integral part of what is being sold by their employers. Indeed,

> the very qualities which men find sexually attractive in the women they harass are the real qualifications for the jobs for which they hire them. It is this good-girl sexiness . . . that qualifies a woman for her job that leaves her open to sexual harassment at any time and to the accusation that she invited it [MacKinnon 1979:23].

Women who enter male-dominated occupations or high-status positions, as conspicuous "token" exceptions to women's position in the occupational world, also suffer from sexual harassment. For them, too, sex-role expectations spill over into work-role expectations. But their jobs require behaviors regarded as masculine—behaviors seen as incongruent with their sex role. The tendency of male coworkers in this situation is to behave toward these women in accordance with the men's primary conception of them, i.e., as women rather than as workers. The women's sex becomes salient, and the men cast them into stereotyped female roles, including "the mother," "the sister," and "the seductress," whose sexuality blots out all other characteristics (Kanter 1977:234–35). While similar stereotyping of women in traditionally female jobs occurs, it is less visible because the expected behavior is perceived to be a part of the woman's job.

In addition, women in "men's jobs" are sexually harassed as a condition of work. Men view the presence of these women as an invasion of male economic turf (i.e., as a challenge to the men's better pay and supervisory authority), an invasion of their social turf (e.g., army barracks, board rooms, and police stations), and a threat to their definition of their work and selves as "masculine." They often harass women to keep them from working effectively, thereby "proving" women's unfitness for a "man's job" and, in some instances, driving out the female "invaders."

Sex-Role Socialization and Cultural Norms

Sexual harassment, as well as the position of women in the occupational world, rests on the social arrangements between the sexes and the perpetuation of these arrangements through sex-role socialization. Sex-role socialization is the process by which people learn the cultural norms for attitudes and behaviors appropriate to their sex; that is, they learn how to think and act as men or as women. These sex-role norms also express the relative positions of the sexes. Male and female sex roles are not simply different; they reflect sexual inequality and, in their enactment, perpetuate it. Women are not born weak, passive, dependent, and receptive to male initiation; they are socially conditioned to develop these qualities. Similarly, men learn that they are expected to be strong, dominant, independent, aggressive, and the initiators of sexual interaction. These expectations and norms permit men as a group to dominate women as a group through the privilege of initiating—and thereby controlling—intimate relationships. The social and sexual power that sex-role norms give men over women is carried into the workplace and reinforced through male economic control of women's livelihood.

Acquiescence to Sexual Harassment

Despite folklore about "women who sleep their way to the top," there is little evidence that women advance on the job by using their sexuality to gain employment benefits. On the contrary, there is strong indication that acquiescence to sexual harassment has harmful effects on women's efforts to gain social and economic equality. Allegations of women's sexual complicity to gain employment benefits trivializes the magnitude of the problem of sexual harassment and obscures the nature of the situation faced by most women by putting it in false moral terms. For example, Phyllis Schlafly asserted that "sexual harassment on the job is not a problem for the virtuous woman except in the rarest of cases" (Rich 1981:A2). Such a statement implies that sexual harassment is the woman's fault. Rather than perceiving the woman as a victim of unwanted attention from someone with power over her livelihood, Schlafly blames the woman who "allows" herself to be harassed—or worse, elicits the harassment—because she is of dubious virtue. However, sexual harassment is not a question of "virtue"; it is a question of power. Women who acquiesce often are not in a position to refuse;

their surrender is the price of survival. And while some women may gain benefits by providing "sexual favors," statistics on women's employment clearly indicate that these must be few in number, since as a group women fail to attain jobs for which they are qualified, much less obtain undeserved advancement.

Both women and men feel injured by the benefits given to acquiescent women. But they direct their anger at the victims rather than looking at the system that permits the victimization. The acquiescence of a few women divides women as a group, thereby diminishing their ability to unite in fighting economic and sexual discrimination. Compliant women become the scapegoats for women's anger, which should properly focus on the men who offer economic rewards at a price, the work organization that permits harassment (often informally regarding it as a perquisite of male employees), or the sexual stratification system that gives men power over women's livelihood and sexuality and perpetuates women's subordination and dependence.

Women's acquiescence to sexual harassment also reinforces the hostility of men to female coworkers. Many men who tolerate or accept a variety of other forms of favoritism in the distribution of job-related rewards, including relationships cultivated on the ball field, in the locker room, or at all-male clubs, are infuriated by the thought that women have and use "advantages" men do not have, making them feel "disadvantaged as a class" (Martin 1980). Men's anger at this form of injustice, however, is directed at both the compliant women and all women on the job, rather than at their male bosses (since it would be dangerous to express such jealousy and anger) or at the system that evades the merit principles it espouses. Such anger also serves as a convenient ego-protecting device, particularly for men of average competence. Stories or rumors about compliant women protect such men's sense of masculinity, which is threatened by the possibility that female coworkers are being advanced ahead of them because the women are more competent. By implying that the only way a woman can succeed is by using her sexuality rather than by performing better than male colleagues, the men can rationalize their failures, redirect their anger at a less threatening target, and thereby reassert their superiority as males.

RESPONSES TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Individual Response Strategies and Their Outcomes

Victims of sexual harassment have limited options for dealing with unwanted sexual attention. They can adopt informal approaches, which include ignoring the harassment and asking the harasser to stop. They can quit the job or seek a transfer; students can change majors or courses. They can use formal grievance and complaint procedures or take legal action. Or they can acquiesce. Each strategy has risks and costs. Informal approaches may be ineffectual and may trigger escalation of the situation or retaliation. Escapist approaches can have substantial economic consequences: the loss of seniority, accumulated job knowledge, personal work-based ties, and income during the transition; the possibility of finding a new job only at a lower salary; and the acquisition of a reputation as an unstable worker. Formal complaints risk reprisals (including failure to be promoted, reduction in duties, dismissal, or, for students, lowered grades and poor recommendations); acquisition of a reputation for being a "troublemaker" among coworkers, who often "blame the victim"; and considerable expense if legal action is taken.

Given these options most women workers seek to handle the situation informally—by either ignoring the behavior, avoiding the harasser, or asking him to stop. In the MSPB study (1981:67), 61 percent of the victims reported ignoring the harassment and 48 percent asking the harasser to stop. Loy and Stewart (n.d.) found 32 percent ignoring the harasser and 39 percent asking him to stop. Respondents in both studies indicated that ignoring the harassment failed to end it and often made it worse. Asking the harasser to stop was effective for 54 percent of the women (MSPB 1981:67)—but ineffective in almost half the cases.

Findings from several studies suggest that the high job-turnover and absenteeism rates for female workers are related to sexual harassment. In the MSPB study, 6 percent of all sexually harassed women (but 14 percent of the rape victims and 10 percent of the severely harassed women) reported subsequently quitting or transferring from their jobs (MSPB 1981:80). Loy and Stewart (n.d.:table 4) found that 17 percent of victims reported quitting or transferring.

Only a small proportion of victimized women adopt the option of seeking a formal remedy: 18 percent according to Silverman (1976–77), 4 percent according to New Responses, Inc. (1979), 12.5 percent according to Loy and Stewart (n.d.:table 4), and almost 3 percent according to the MSPB (1981:70). The vast majority of female victims do not complain through official channels, due to ignorance of available remedies, the belief that formal action is less effective than informal treatment, and fear of making the situation worse. Fear of reprisals and negative outcomes appears to be well founded. Among MSPB respondents who had taken formal action, 41 percent found that their actions had no effect or made things worse (MSPB 1981:88–92).

Acquiescence is also an option. In the case of the less severely harassed, this generally means tolerating suggestive looks, jokes, teasing, or pressure to go on dates. According to the MSPB study, 18 percent of the less severely harassed, 3 percent of the severely harassed, and 14 percent of the rape/assault victims reported that they "went along with the behavior," but only 8 percent of these women found that things had improved as a result (MSPB 1981:67).

Female students manage unwanted sexual attention in ways similar to those adopted by working women. Some, fearful of making a direct complaint, try to ignore the harassing behavior or use indirect strategies for stopping it. These include directing discussion with the instructor back to the academic issue, bringing a friend to the instructor's office to avoid being alone with the instructor, and talking about a husband or boyfriend to indicate sexual unavailability. About 30 percent of the student victims did not directly communicate their displeasure to the harassing instructor; for almost all of these women (thirteen out of fifteen) his unwanted behavior continued (Benson and Thomson 1982:244). The 70 percent who directly communicated their displeasure were more successful in stopping the harassment, although the professor's power tended to affect this outcome. Power was measured by three factors: whether the professor had tenure, whether he was in the student's chosen major field, and whether the student aspired to attend graduate school. The sexual harassment stopped in twenty-one of the twenty-four cases in which one or two of the three conditions were present. However, the harassment stopped in only five of the eleven instances in which all three were present (Benson and Thomson 1982:244). Even when the harassment stopped, however, students who did not reciprocate sexual attention were often punished by the instructor's withdrawal of intellectual support and encouragement, critical comments about work that formerly had been praised, and lower grades.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Since the late 1970s the federal government's response to pressures to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace has been the relatively swift establishment of formal policy. Sexual harassment has been defined as an illegal form of sex discrimination by both the courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Despite this clear policy mandate, however, enforcement of the law remains weak. Punishment of harassers is rare, and victims continue to suffer the triple burden of harassment, hostility and suspicion of coworkers, and reprisals by supervisors.

Development of Case Law Concerning Sexual Harassment

Although women who experience sexual harassment recognize that it was done to them *as* women, achieving legal acceptance of the argument that sexual harassment is sex discrimination prohibited by law has not been simple. Several different interpretations of the meaning of sex discrimination and of an employer's liability for sexual harassment have been presented to and adopted by the courts. (See MacKinnon 1979 for an analysis of the legal issues.) Underlying these legal interpretations is the more basic question of how gender, sexuality, and power are related.

In the early cases the plaintiffs argued unsuccessfully that sexual harassment is an illegal form of sex discrimination (see *Corne v. Bausch and Lomb, Inc.*, 390 F. Supp. 161 [D.C. Ariz. 1975]; *Miller v. Bank of America*, 418 F. Supp. 233 [N.D. Calif. 1976] *reversed*, 600 F. 2d 211 (1979); *Barnes v. Train*, Civ. No. 1828–73 [D. D.C., Aug. 9, 1974]; and *Tomkins v. Public Service Electric and Gas Co.*, 422 F. Supp. 553 [D. N.J. 1976]). In *Corne*, for example, Jane Corne and Geneva DeVane alleged that the repeated verbal and physical sexual advances of their male supervisor made their jobs intolerable and forced them to choose between "putting up with being manhandled or being out of work" (Brief of Appellants at 17). They argued that their employer, Bausch and Lomb, Inc., was responsible, because it had allowed them to be supervised by a man who sexually harassed them. The judge, however, dismissed the claim that the advances constituted sex discrimination, stating that the supervisor's conduct was simply "a personal proclivity, peculiarity, or mannerism" (390 F. Supp. at 163) for which the employer could not be held liable. The court also found that the supervisor's behavior was not "based on sex" because the harassment might have been directed at male as well as at female employees. In addition, the judge expressed concern that granting relief in this case might lead to "a potential federal lawsuit every time an employee made an amorous or sexually-oriented advance toward another" (390 F. Supp. at 163–64). Similarly, in *Tomkins*, in denying that sexual harassment is either sex-based discrimination or employment-related, the court stated:

> In this case the supervisor was male and the employee was female. But no immutable principle of psychology compels this alignment of parties. . . . While sexual desire animated the parties, or at least one of them, the gender of each is incidental to the claim of abuse [422 F. Supp. at 556].

A different conclusion, reached in *Williams v. Saxbe*, 431 F. Supp. 654 (D. D.C. 1976), *reversed on other grounds sub. nom. Williams v. Bell*, 587 F.2d 1240 (D.C. Cir. 1978), marked the turning of the tide. The court ruled that a male supervisor's retaliatory action against a female employee who refused his sexual advances constituted treatment "based on sex" within the meaning of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; but the employment-relatedness of each incident was left to be determined as a fact at trial.

The *Williams* result was followed by reversals on appeal in *Barnes* and *Tomkins* and similar rulings in several other cases (*Barnes v. Costle*, 561 F.2d 982 [D.C. Cir. 1977]; *Tomkins v. Public Service Electric and Gas Co.*, 568 F.2d 1044 [3d Cir. 1977]). In reversing *Barnes* the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that making sexual compliance a "job retention condition" imposed an employment requirement upon a woman that would not be imposed on a man and for which the employer was held accountable. The court affirmed that, for discrimination in employment to be found, "it is enough that gender is a factor contributing to the discrimination in a substantial way" (561 F.2d at 990). In reversing *Tomkins*, the Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit affirmed that an unresponsive employer to whom a victim had complained was thus liable. As a result of these later cases, the law now supports the claim that sexual harassment involving sexual compliance or retaliation for refusal to comply is sex discrimination in violation of Title VII, makes the employer liable for the conduct of supervisors and coworkers, and imposes the same legal burden on federal, state, and private employers.

Case law prohibiting sexual harassment as sex-based discrimination against students under Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments Act is not well established, but most of the arguments are now similar to those already established under Title VII. In a lawsuit brought against Yale University (*Alexander v. Yale University*, 459 F. Supp. 1 [D. Conn. 1977], *reversed on other grounds*, 631 F.2d 178 [2d Cir. 1980]), a student alleged that her grade was adversely affected by her refusal to submit to her professor's sexual demands. Using reasoning developed in the context of employment discrimination cases, the court held that the student had stated a cause of action under Title IX but dismissed the suit because the complainant had failed to prove that an improper advance had been made or that she had been adversely affected. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed this reasoning, making it very likely that the courts will continue to decide claims of sexual harassment brought by students under Title IX.

In a landmark decision in January 1981, the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit expanded coverage in sex-discrimination cases to sexual harassment as a condition of work. The court extended the phrase "terms, conditions, and privileges of employment" to cover nontangible injury to the victim. In *Bundy v. Jackson*, 641 F.2d 934 (D.C. Cir. 1981), the court held that sexual harassment in and of itself is a violation of the law. The court noted that, unless it prohibited employers from maintaining a "discriminatory environment," the employer could sexually harass a female employee with impunity by carefully stopping short of firing her or taking other action against her when she resisted.

The turnabout of the courts has been dramatic. Although the early cases involved blatant abuses of power by supervisors, the judges treated these abuses as matters of "natural" attraction or the personal peculiarity of the supervisors unrelated to job conditions. As legal analyses clarified the relationship between sexual harassment and sex discrimination, as research supported the claims that sexual harassment is widespread and socially patterned, as the EEOC added its authority in support of the plaintiffs in a number of cases, and as the media called public attention to the issue, the courts could no longer sustain the traditional "personal proclivity" approach. They shifted to the view that sexual harassment is an illegal, socially imposed wrong—sex discrimination—not only when the victim faces tangible economic losses but also when the harassment is made a condition of work. Thus the law now acknowledges the socially defined character of sexual harassment by recognizing that the unwanted sexual advances are "based on sex" and that women are sexually harassed because they are women.

The Federal Government and Sexual Harassment

Before 1979 no federal agency had a policy prohibiting sexual harassment. In the fall of that year, the Subcommittee on Investigations of the House Committee on the Post Office and Civil Service held hearings on sexual harassment in the federal government and called on the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB)[3] to conduct a study of sexual harassment in the federal workplace, apparently in response to adverse publicity indicating widespread sexual harassment in a government agency (Ripskis 1979) and pressures from a variety of organizations representing working women.

In December 1979, the Office of Personnel Management issued a policy statement regarding sexual harassment. The statement included a definition of sexual harassment applicable throughout the federal government, an unequivocal declaration that such harassment is unacceptable conduct in the workplace, and a directive to each federal agency to establish policies to reduce sexual harassment and grievance mechanisms to handle complaints (U.S. House of Representatives 1980:7–8).

In September 1980, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued guidelines on sexual harassment in federal and private employment that prohibit such behavior as a form of discrimination under Title VII and hold employers to the same standards of strict liability for the acts of supervisors or their other agents as in other violations of Title VII. The guidelines declare that the degree of injury sufficient to support a finding of sexual harassment may occur under three sets of circumstances: (1) where the sexual conduct is made an explicit term or condition of an individual's employment (employment condition); (2) where submission to or rejection of the condition is used as a basis for employment decisions (employment consequence); and (3) where the condition creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating work environment or interferes with job performance (offensive job interference). The EEOC position prohibiting offensive job interference was subsequently supported by the court in the *Bundy* decision.

Clear prohibition of sexual harassment is an important first step toward recognition of the problem it poses for women. It provides victims with legal redress, establishes employer responsibility, and encourages employees to resist harassment. However, enforcement of the law, and even women's willingness to invoke it, remains far from a reality. While many government agencies have adopted policies prohibiting sexual harassment and established grievance procedures for addressing it, most private employers do not appear to have done so (Livingston 1982). Furthermore, existing procedures rely principally on informal mediation; if a problem cannot be resolved informally the mechanisms for redress break down, since few employers have policies for using sanctions.

Women often fail to define certain offensive behaviors as sexual harassment, blame other women or themselves rather than the harasser for the experience (Jensen and Gutek 1982), and, when they do label the unwanted behavior as harassment, tend to treat it as an individual matter to be handled informally. Their reluctance to take more formal action for fear of making things worse, particularly at a time of economic insecurity and reduced enforcement of civil rights laws by the Reagan administration, appears to be well founded.

Even more frequent complaints and fuller enforcement through formal channels, however, only provide redress on a case-by-case basis without addressing the structural causes of sexual harassment—sex-role expectations and women's limited access to power.

CONCLUSION

Sexual harassment in the university and the workplace must be recognized and treated as an oppressive form of sex discrimination that undercuts women's potential for independence and equality. It disrupts women's drive for autonomy outside of the home and family by sexualizing women's work role and by making sexuality a condition of economic survival. Women as a group suffer from two inequalities: inequality based on socially defined patterns of sexual initiative and acquiescence, and economic inequality maintained by women's separate and subordinate place at work. Sexual harassment links these inequalities by expressing the unequal social power of women, sexualizing their subordination, and deepening their powerlessness as women.

NOTES

1. Although men have been victims of sexual harassment as well as women, the vast difference between the sexes in victimization rates and the meaning attached to sexual initiatives make it primarily a problem of women. Only research findings on the sexual harassment of women are presented here, and the analysis of harassment is from the perspective of female victims.
2. One study found that more than 70 percent of the women surveyed would not call a behavior sexual harassment if the person doing it did not mean to be offensive (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board [MSPB] 1981:29).
3. In 1978 the Civil Service Reform Act reorganized the Civil Service Commission by dividing it into two agencies: MSPB and the Office of Personnel Management. The MSPB hears and adjudicates appeals by federal employees complaining of adverse personnel actions, resolves cases charging prohibited personnel practices, and conducts special studies on the civil service and other executive branch merit systems. The Office of Personnel Management administers a merit system for federal employees, which includes recruitment, examination, training, and promotion of people on the basis of their knowledge and skill.

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BARBARA KATZ ROTHMAN

Women, health, and medicine

Women are not only people: *woman* is a subject one can study, even specialize in within medicine. Obstetricians and gynecologists are medicine's, and perhaps society's, generally recognized "experts" on the subject of women, especially women's bodies: their health, reproductive functioning, and sexuality.[1] *Obstetrics* is the branch of medicine concerning the care of women during pregnancy, labor, and the time surrounding childbirth[2] and is similar in some ways to midwifery. *Gynecology* is the "science of the diseases of women, especially those affecting the sex organs."[3] There is no comparable "science" of the study of men, *their* diseases, and/or reproductive functions. An attempt by urologists in 1891 to develop an "andrology" specialty came to nothing.[4]

At its simplest, a medical specialty can be seen as arising out of preexisting needs. People have heart attacks: the medical specialty of cardiology develops. Or the amount of knowledge generated in a field grows so enormously that no one person can hope to master it all: physicians "carve out" their own areas of specialization. Increasing knowledge about cancer thus led to the specialty of oncology and subspecialties within oncology.

But the development of a medical specialty is not necessarily the creation of a key for an already existing lock. Medical needs do not necessarily predate the specialty, even though the specialty is presumably organized to meet those needs. This has been made quite clear in the work of Thomas Szasz on the relatively recent expansion of medicine into such "social problem" areas as alcoholism, gambling, and suicide.[5] Medicine does not have the "cures" for these problems, but by defining them in medical terms, as sickness, the physician gains political control over the societal response: punishment becomes "treatment," desired or not, successful or not. Similarly, medical control over childbirth, lactation, menopause, and other women's health issues was not based on superior ability to deal with these concerns.

The case of Jacoba Felice de Almania, a woman tried for the illegal practice of medicine in 1322, illustrates this point. In her defense Almania had witnesses who testified that she never charged unless she cured and that her cures were

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successful where other, "legal" (male) practitioners had failed. However, since she had not attended a medical school (medical schools being closed to women), she was not licensed to practice medicine. That she saw women who did not want to go to a male practitioner and that she was successful did not matter. "Efficacy of treatment was not the criterion for determining who was or was not a legitimate medical practitioner, but the educational requirements and membership in the faculty of an organized group were the most important factors."[6] In essence, the statement behind professional control over medicine is: "We may not be able to help you, but we are the only ones qualified to try."

Vern Bullough, in his analysis of the development of medicine as a profession, writes about the situation during the Middle Ages: "One obvious group outside of the control of the university physician was the midwife, but during the period under study the university physician generally ignored this whole *area of medicine.* Midwives might or might not be qualified, but this *was not a matter of public concern*"[7] (emphasis added). More accurately, one might state not that physicians ignored this "area of medicine" but that midwifery and its concerns were outside the area of medicine, just as other matters that were undoubtedly of concern to women existed outside of the "public" concern. Until pregnancy and childbirth were defined as medical events, midwifery was in no sense a branch, area, or interest of medicine as a profession.

Medical expansion into the area of childbirth began before the development of asepsis, surgical techniques, or anesthesia—any of what are now considered the contributions of obstetrics. And yet, even without the technology, medicine had begun to redefine childbirth by the beginning of the nineteenth century. It came to be seen not as a family or religious event, but as a medical one, needing medical presence for its safe conduct.[8]

Midwives treated childbirth in the larger context of women's lives. Midwives did not and do not "deliver" babies. They teach women how to give birth. Brack has called the role of the midwife "total"—she helped both as teacher and as role model in the socialization of the mother to her new status. "The midwife's relation to the woman was both diffuse and affective, while the physician role demanded specificity and affective neutrality."[9] Midwives taught how to birth babies, how to nurse them, how to care for the babies and for the mother's own body. Physicians deliver babies and move on. The physician "isolated the laboring woman and her delivery of the infant from the rest of the childbearing experience, and defined it as a medical and surgical event which required specialized knowledge."[10] As one modern nurse-midwife has said of obstetrics residents: "They want us to stay with the woman in labor and just call them when she's ready to deliver. To them, that's the whole thing."

At the time that physicians were taking over control of childbirth, it is virtually unarguable that the noninterventionist, supportive techniques of the midwives were safer for both the birthing woman and her baby. The physicians' approaches included bleeding to "syncope" (until the woman fainted), tobacco infusion enemas, frequent nonsterile examinations, and other surgical and chemical interventions.[11] In the 1910s and 1920s, as American physicians successfully ousted midwives, the midwives' safety records remained better than the physicians'. In Newark from 1914 to 1916, a midwifery program achieved a maternal mortality rate as low as 1.7 per thousand, while in Boston, where midwives were banned, the rate was 6.5 per thousand. Similarly, the infant mortality rate in Newark was 8.5 per thousand, contrasted with 37.4 in Boston.[12] In Washington, as the percentage of births reported by midwives shrank from 50 percent in 1903 to 15 percent in 1912, infant mortality in the first day, first week, and first month of life all increased. New York's dwindling corps of midwives did significantly better than did New York doctors in preventing both stillbirths and postpartum infection.[13]

The physician's separation of the delivery of the baby from its larger socioemotional context has its roots as far back as René Descartes's concept of mind–body dualism. To Descartes, the body was a machine whose structure and operation fall within the province of human knowledge, as distinguished from the mind, which God alone can know. Though even the Hippocratic principles state that the mind and body should be considered together, "most physicians, . . . irrespective of their professional activities and philosophical views on the nature of the mind, behave in practice as if they were still Cartesian dualists. Their conservative attitudes are largely a matter of practical convenience."[14]

The medical models used for convenience are that diseases are the bad guys that the good-guy medications can cure; that the body breaks down and needs repair; that the body can be repaired in the hospital like a car in the shop; and that once "fixed" the person can be returned to the community. The earliest models were largely mechanical; later models worked more with chemistry; and newer, more sophisticated medical writing describes computerlike programming. But the basic points remain the same. These models were useful when dealing with the problems facing medicine at the turn of the century: primarily bacterial and viral disease-causing agents and simple accidents and trauma. They have never worked well for understanding the problems that women face in dealing with doctors, including those encountered during the experience of childbirth. While midwives learned by apprenticeship, doctors were instructed in the use of forceps, as well as in the techniques of normal delivery, by "book learning," by discussion, by the use of wooden models, and infrequently by watching another doctor at work. Dorothy Wertz, in her study of the development of obstetrics, has pointed out that "by regarding the female body as a machine, European doctors found that they could measure the birth canal and predict whether or not the child could pass through."[15] Stories of women giving birth while their doctors scrub for a cesarean section are part of the lore of midwifery. Among the stories midwives tell each other are tales of women who were told that they could never deliver vaginally and then went on to have normal births of oversized babies.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries midwives and physicians were in direct competition for patients, and not only for their fees. Newer, more clinically oriented medical training demanded "teaching material," so that even immigrant and poor women were desired as patients.[16] The displacement of the midwife by the male obstetrician can be better understood in terms of this competition than as an ideological struggle or as "scientific advancement." Physicians, unlike the unorganized, disenfranchised midwives, had access to the power of the state through their professional associations. They were thus able to control licensing legislation, restricting the midwife's sphere of activity and imposing legal sanctions against her in state after state.[17]

The legislative changes were backed up by the medical establishment's attempt to win public disapproval for midwifery and support for obstetrics. Physicians accused midwives of ignorance and incompetence and attacked midwifery practices as "meddlesome." Rather than upgrading the practice of midwifery by teaching the skills physicians thought necessary, the profession of medicine refused to train women either as midwives or as physicians.[18] Physicians argued repeatedly that medicine was the appropriate profession to handle birth because "normal pregnancy and parturition are exceptions and to consider them to be normal physiologic conditions was a fallacy."[19] Childbirth was redefined as a medical rather than a social event, and the roles and care surrounding it were reorganized to suit medical needs.[20]

Once professional dominance was established in the area of childbirth, obstetrics rapidly expanded into the relatively more sophisticated area of gynecology. The great obstetricians of the nineteenth century were invariably gynecologists (and of course all men).[21] Among other effects, this linking of obstetrics and gynecology further reinforced the obstetrical orientation toward pathology.

One of the earliest uses of the developing field of gynecology was the overt social control of women through surgical removal of various sexual organs. Surgical removal of the clitoris (clitoridectomy) or, less dramatically, its foreskin (circumcision) and removal of the ovaries (oopherectomy or castration) were used to check women's "mental disorders." The first gynecologist to do a clitoridectomy was an Englishman, in 1858.[22] In England, the procedure was harshly criticized and not repeated by others after the death of the originator in 1860. In America, however, clitoridectomies were done regularly from the late 1860s until at least 1904[23] and then sporadically until as recently as the late 1940s.[24] The procedure was used to terminate sexual desire or sexual behavior, something deemed pathological in women. Circumcisions were done on women of all ages to stop masturbation up until at least 1937.[25]

More widespread than clitoridectomies or circumcisions were oopherectomies for psychological "disorders." Interestingly, the female gonads were removed not when women were "too female"—i.e., too passive or dependent—but when women were too masculine—assertive, aggressive, "unruly." Oopherectomies for "psychiatric" reasons were done in America between 1872 and 1946.[26] (By the 1940s, prefrontal lobotomies were gaining acceptance as psychosurgery.)

The developing medical control of women was not limited to extreme cures for psychiatric problems. The physical health and stability of even the most well-adjusted, ladylike women were questioned. Simply by virtue of gender, women were (and are) subject to *illness labeling*.

One explanation for women's vulnerability to illness labeling lies in the functionalist approach to the sociology of health. Talcott Parsons has pointed out that it is a functional requirement of any social system that there be a basic level of health of its members.[27] Any definition of illness that is too lenient would disqualify too many people from fulfilling their functions and would impose severe strains on the social system. System changes, such as war, can make changes in standards of health and illness generally set for members. This works on an individual level as well, standards of health and illness being related to social demands: a mild headache will excuse a student from attending class but not from taking final exams. A logical extension of this is that the less valued a person's or group's contribution to society, the more easily are such people labeled ill.

Women are not always seen as functional members of society, as people doing important things. This has historically and cross-culturally been especially true of the women of the upper classes in partriarchal societies, where it is a mark of status for a man to be able to afford to keep a wife who is not performing any useful function. A clear, if horrifying, example of this is the traditional Chinese practice of foot-binding. By crippling girls, men were able to show that they could afford to have wives and daughters who did nothing. It is a particularly disturbing example of conspicuous consumption. But we do not have to turn to faraway places to see women defined as useless. In their historical analysis of the woman patient, *Complaints and Disorders*, Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English speak of the "lady of leisure" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. "She was the social ornament that proved a man's success; her idleness, her delicacy, her childlike ignorance of 'reality' gave a man the 'class' that money alone could not provide."[28]

The practice of creating physical deformity in women can be seen in our history as well. A woman researcher who studied menstrual problems among college women between 1890 and 1920 found that women in the earlier period probably were somewhat incapacitated by menstruation, just as the gynecologists of the day were claiming. However, the researcher did not attribute the menstrual problems to women's "inherent disabilities" or "overgrowth of the intellect" as did the male physicians; she related it to dress styles. Women in the 1890s carried some fifteen pounds of skirts and petticoats, hanging from a tightly corseted waist. As skirts got lighter and waists were allowed to be larger, menstruation ceased to be the problem it had been.[29] In the interest of science, women might try the experiment of buckling themselves into a painfully small belt and hanging a fifteen pound weight from it. One might expect weakness, fatigue, shortness of breath, even fainting: all the physical symptoms of women's "inherent" disability. And consider further the effects of bleeding as a treatment for the problem.

It follows from Parsons's analysis that, in addition to suffering created physical disabilities (the bound feet of the Chinese, the deforming corsetry of our own history), women were more easily *defined* as sick when they were not seen as functional social members. At the same time in our history that the upper-class women were "delicate," "sickly," and "frail," the working-class women were well enough to perform the physical labor of housework, both their own and that of the upper classes, as well as to work in the factories and fields. "However sick or tired working class women might have been, they certainly did not have the time or money to support a cult of invalidism. Employers gave no time off for pregnancy or recovery from childbirth, much less for menstrual periods, though the wives of these same employers often retired to bed on all these occasions."[30]

The working-class women were seen as strong and healthy; for them, pregnancy, menstruation, and menopause were not allowed to be incapacitating.

These two factors—the treatment of the body as a machine and the lesser functional importance assigned to women—still account for much of the medical treatment of women. Contemporary physicians do not usually speak of the normal female reproductive functions as diseases. The exception, to be discussed below, is menopause. The other specifically female reproductive functions—menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation—are regularly asserted in medical texts to be normal and healthy phenomena. However, these statements are made within the context of teaching the medical "management," "care," "supervision," and "treatment" of each of these "conditions."

Understood in limited mechanical terms, each of these normal female conditions or happenings is a complication or stress on an otherwise normal system. Medicine has fared no better than any other discipline in developing a working model of women that does not take men as the comparative norm. For example, while menstruation is no longer viewed as a disease, it is seen as a complication in the female system, contrasted to the reputed biological stability of the supposedly noncycling male.[31] As recently as 1961 the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* was still referring to women's "inherent disabilities" in explanations of menstruation:

> Women are known to suffer at least some inconvenience during certain phases of the reproductive cycle, and often with considerable mental and physical distress. Woman's awareness of her inherent disabilities is thought to create added mental and in turn physical changes in the total body response, and there result problems that concern the physician who must deal with them.[32]

Research on contraception displays the same mechanistic biases. The claim has been made that contraceptive research has concentrated on the female rather than the male because of the sheer number of potentially vulnerable links in the female chain of reproductive events.[33] Reproduction is clearly a more complicated process for the female than the male. While we might claim that it is safer to interfere in a simpler process, medicine has tended to view the number of points in the female reproductive process as distinct entities. Reproduction is dealt with not as a complicated organic process but as a series of discrete points, like stations on an assembly line, with more for female than for male.

The alternative to taking the female system as a complication of the "basic" or "simpler" male system is of course to take female as the working norm. In this approach, a pregnant woman is compared only to pregnant women, a lactating breast compared only to other lactating breasts. Pregnancy and lactation are accepted not only as nominally healthy variations but as truly normal states. To take the example of pregnancy, women *are* pregnant; pregnancy is not something they "have" or "catch" or even "contain." It involves physical changes: they are not, as medical texts frequently call them, "symptoms" of pregnancy. Pregnancy is not a disease, and its changes are no more symptoms than the growth spurt or development of pubic hair are symptomatic of puberty. There may be diseases or complications of pregnancy, but the pregnancy itself is neither disease nor complication.

In contrast, medicine's working model of pregnancy is a woman with an insulated parasitic capsule growing inside. The pregnancy, while physically located within the woman, is still seen as external to her, not a part of her. The capsule within has been seen as virtually omniscient and omnipotent, reaching out and taking what it needs from the mother-host, at her expense if necessary, while protected from all that is bad or harmful.

The pregnancy, in this medical model, is almost entirely a mechanical event in the mother. She differs from the nonpregnant woman only in the presence of this thing growing inside her. Differences other than the mechanical are accordingly seen as symptoms to be treated, so that the woman can be kept as "normal" as possible through the "stress" of the pregnancy. Pregnancy in this model is not seen necessarily as inherently unhealthy, but it is frequently associated with changes other than the growth of the uterus and its contents, and these changes are seen as unhealthy. For example, hemoglobin (iron) is lower in pregnant women than nonpregnant, making pregnant women appear (by nonpregnant standards) anemic. They are then treated for this anemia with iron supplements. Water retention, or edema, is greater in pregnant women than nonpregnant, so pregnant women are treated with limits placed on their salt intake and with diuretics. Pregnant women tend to gain weight over that accounted for by the fetus, placenta, and amniotic fluid. They are treated for this weight gain with strict diets, sometimes even with "diet pills." And knowing that these changes are likely to occur in pregnant women, American doctors generally have tried to treat all pregnant women with iron supplements, with limits on salt and calorie intake, and sometimes with diuretics. This attempt to cure the symptoms has brought us not only strict diets to prevent normal weight gain and diuretics to prevent normal fluid retention but also the dangerous drugs, from thalidomide to Bendectin, to prevent nausea. Each of these "cures" has had devastating effects: fetal malformation, maternal and fetal illness, even death.

What is particularly important to note is that these "treatments" of entirely normal phenomena are frequently not perceived by the medical profession as interventions or disruptions. Rather, the physician sees himself as assisting nature, restoring the woman to normality. Janet Bogdan, in her study of the development of obstetrics, reports that in the 1800s, a noninterventionist physician, as opposed to a "regular" physician, would give a laboring woman some castor oil or milk of magnesia, catheterize her, bleed her a pint or so, administer ergot, and use poultices to blister her. "Any of these therapies would be administered in the interests of setting the parturient up for an easier, less painful labor and delivery, while still holding to the belief that the physician was letting nature take its course."[34] Dorothy Wertz says that medicine currently has redefined "natural childbirth," in response to consumer demand for it, to include any of the following techniques: spinal or epidural anesthesia, inhalation anesthesia in the second stage of labor, forceps, episiotomy, induced labor.[35] Each of these techniques increases the risks of childbirth for mothers and babies.[36] Under the title "Normal Delivery," an obstetric teaching film shows "the use of various drugs and procedures used to facilitate normal delivery." Another "Normal Delivery" film is "a demonstration of a normal, spontaneous delivery, including a paracervical block, episiotomy. . . . "

As both the technology of "curing" and the technology of "diagnosis" grow more powerful, the danger increases. The extraordinary rise in cesarean sections starting in the 1970s in the United States provides a striking example of this. Refinements in anesthesiology, and to a lesser extent in surgery itself, have made the cesarean section a much safer procedure in recent years. While it is not, and cannot be, as safe as an unmedicated vaginal birth—a section is major abdominal surgery, and all anesthesia entails risks—it is unquestionably safer today than it was twenty or forty years ago. Thus the "cure" is more readily used. But what is the disease? The disease is labor, or course. While medicine now claims that pregnancy and labor are not diseases per se, they are always considered in terms of "riskiness": labor is at best "low risk" and is increasingly often defined as "high risk." At first only labors defined as high risk, but now even low-risk labors, are routinely being monitored electronically. The electronic fetal monitor has a belt that wraps around the pregnant belly, thus preventing normal walking and movement, and an electrode that goes into the vagina and literally screws into the top of the baby's head. Contractions, fetal heartbeat, and fetal scalp blood are all continuously monitored. With all of this diagnostic sophistication, "fetal distress" can be detected—and presumably cured, by cesarean section. The National Center for Health Services Research announced as far back as 1978 that electronic fetal monitoring may do more harm than good, citing among other things the dangers of the rapidly increasing cesarean section rate, but monitoring is still receiving widespread medical acceptance.[37]

The use of estrogens provides an even better example of how medicine views the body as a machine that can be "run" or managed without being changed. Estrogens are female hormones; in medicine they are seen as femininity in a jar. In the widely selling *Feminine Forever*, Dr. Robert A. Wilson, pushing "estrogen replacement therapy" for all menopausal women, calls estrogen levels, as detected by examination of cells from the vagina, a woman's "femininity index."[38] As estrogen levels naturally drop off after menopause a woman, according to Wilson, is losing her femininity. Interestingly, estrogen levels are also quite low while a woman is breast-feeding, something not usually socially linked to a "loss of femininity."

Menopause remains the one normal female process that is still overtly referred to as a disease in the medical literature. To some physicians, menopause is a "deficiency disease," and the use of estrogens is restoring the woman to her "normal" condition. Here we must reconsider the question of women's functional importance in the social system. Middle-aged housewives have been called the last of the "ladies of leisure," having outlived their social usefulness as wife-mothers and having been allowed no alternatives. While oopherectomies and clitoridectomies are no longer being done on upper-class women as they were a hundred years ago, to cure all kinds of dubious ills, older women are having hysterectomies (surgical removal of the uterus) at alarming rates.[39] Much more typical of modern medicine, however, is the use of chemical rather than surgical "therapy." Because the social changes and demands for readjustment of middle age roughly coincide with the time of menopause, menopause becomes the "illness" for which women can be treated.

Estrogens have been used in virtually every stage of the female reproductive cycle, usually with the argument that they return the woman to normal or are a "natural" treatment. Estrogens are used to keep adolescent girls from getting "unnaturally" tall; to treat painful menstruation; as contraception, supposedly mimicking pregnancy; as a chemical abortion in the "morning after" pill; to replace supposedly missing hormones and thus to prevent miscarriages; to dry up milk and return women to the "normal" nonlactating state; and to return menopausal women to the "normal" cycling state. For all the claims of normality and natural treatment, at this writing approximately half of these uses of estrogens have been shown to cause cancer. The use of estrogens in pregnancy was the first to be proved carcinogenic: daughters of women who had taken estrogens (notably DES, a synthetic estrogen) are at risk for the development of a rare cancer of the vagina.[40] The sequential birth-control pill was taken off the market as the danger of endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus) became known,[41] and, similarly, estrogens taken in menopause have been shown to increase the risk of endometrial cancer by as much as fourteen times after seven years of use.[42]

The model of the body as a machine that can be regulated, controlled, and managed by medical treatments is not working. "Femininity" or physical "femaleness" is not something that comes in a jar and can be manipulated. Nor are women accepting the relegation to secondary functional importance, as wives and mothers of men. In rejecting the viewpoint that women bear men's children for them, women are reclaiming their bodies. When pregnancy is seen not as the presence of a (man's) fetus in a woman but as a condition of the woman herself, attitudes toward contraception, infertility, abortion, and childbirth all change. When pregnancy is perceived as a condition of the woman, then abortion, for example, is primarily a response to that condition.

The women's health movement has grown as an important part of the contemporary women's movement. In some of its work, the health movement has been geared toward consumerism within medicine, seeking better medical care and a wider range of services for women. While better trained, more knowledgeable, and more humane physicians are a high priority, what the self-help and lay midwifery groups are doing goes much deeper than that. I believe that these women are reconstructing the preobstetrics and pregynecology model of women's health. They are redefining women's health in fundamentally women's terms. The extraordinary scope and power of this redefinition can be seen in the two-volume proceedings of a 1979 conference on "Ethical Issues in Human Reproductive Technology: Analysis by Women." This work demonstrates the fundamental reevaluations that come with feminist insight.[43]

On a more pragmatic level, feminist clinics and self-help groups are teaching women how to examine their own bodies, not in the neverending search for pathology in which physicians are trained, but to learn more about health. Medical technology and physicians are clearly useful in treating illness, but do we really want physicians to be "treating" health? It is entirely possible for a woman to fit herself for a diaphragm, do a pap smear and a breast examination (all with help and instruction if she needs it), and never adopt the patient role. It is also possible for a woman to go through a pregnancy and birth her baby with good, knowledgable, caring help, without becoming a patient under the supervision of a physician.

Redefining normality within the context of the female reproductive system will take time. Women have been imbued with the medical model of women's bodies and health, and it is hard to work past that. Redefining women in women's terms is not a problem unique to health. It is an essential feminist issue.

NOTES

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PART TWO

In and Out of the Family

KATHLEEN GOUGH

The origin of the family

The trouble with the origin of the family is that no one really knows. Since [Friedrich] Engels wrote *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* . . . in 1884,[1] a great deal of new evidence has come in. Yet the gaps are still enormous. It is not known *when* the family originated, although it was probably between two million and 100,000 years ago. It is not known whether it developed once or in separate times and places. It is not known whether some kind of embryonic family came before, with, or after the origin of language. Since language is the accepted criterion of humanness, this means that we do not even know whether our ancestors acquired the basics of family life before or after they were human. The chances are that language and the family developed together over a long period. But the evidence is sketchy.

Although the origin of the family is speculative, it is better to speculate with than without evidence. The evidence comes from three sources. One is the social and physical lives of nonhuman primates—especially the New and Old World monkeys and, still more, the great apes, humanity's closest relatives. The second source is the tools and home sites of prehistoric humans and protohumans. The third is the family lives of hunters and gatherers of wild provender who have been studied in modern times.

Each of these sources is imperfect: monkeys and apes, because they are *not* prehuman ancestors, although they are our cousins; fossil hominids, because they left so little vestige of their social life; hunters and gatherers, because none of them has, in historic times, possessed a technology and society as primitive as those of early humans. All show the results of long endeavor in specialized, marginal environments. But together, these sources give valuable clues.

DEFINING THE FAMILY

To discuss the origin of something we must first decide what it is. I shall define the family as "a married couple or other group of adult kinfolk who cooperate economically and in the upbringing of children, and all or most of whom share a common dwelling."

This includes all forms of kin-based households. Some are extended families

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containing three generations of married brothers or sisters. Some are "grandfamilies" descended from a single pair of grandparents. Some are matrilineage households, in which brothers and sisters share a house with the sisters' children, and men merely visit their wives in other homes. Some are compound families, in which one man has several wives, or one woman, several husbands. Others are nuclear families composed of a father, mother, and children.

Some kind of family exists in all known human societies, although it is not found in every segment or class of all stratified, state societies. Greek and American slaves, for example, were prevented from forming legal families, and their social families were often disrupted by sale, forced labor, or sexual exploitation. Even so, the family was an ideal which all classes and most people attained when they could.

The family implies several other universals. (1) Rules forbid sexual relations and marriage between close relatives. Which relatives are forbidden varies, but all [known] societies forbid mother-son mating, and most, father-daughter and brother-sister. Some societies allow sex relations, but forbid marriage, between certain degrees of kin. (2) The men and women of a family cooperate through a division of labor based on gender. Again, the sexual division of labor varies in rigidity and in the tasks performed. But in no human society to date is it wholly absent. Child care, household tasks and crafts closely connected with the household, tend to be done by women; war, hunting, and government, by men. (3) Marriage exists as a socially recognized, durable, although not necessarily lifelong relationship between individual men and women. From it springs social fatherhood, some kind of special bond between a man and the child of his wife, whether or not they are his own children physiologically. Even in polyandrous societies, where women have several husbands, or in matrilineal societies, where group membership and property pass through women, each child has one or more designated "fathers" with whom he has a special social, and often religious, relationship. This bond of *social* fatherhood is recognized among people who do not know about the male role in procreation, or where, for various reasons, it is not clear who the physiological father of a particular infant is. Social fatherhood seems to come from the division and interdependence of male and female tasks, especially in relation to children, rather than directly from physiological fatherhood, although, in most societies, the social father of a child is usually presumed to be its physiological father as well. Contrary to the beliefs of some feminists, however, I think that in no human society do men, as a whole category, have *only* the role of insemination, and *no* other social or economic role, in relation to women and children. (4) Men in general have higher status and authority over the women of their families, although older women may have influence, even some authority, over junior men. The omnipresence of male authority, too, goes contrary to the belief of some feminists that in "matriarchal" societies, women were either completely equal to, or had paramount authority over, men, either in the home or in society at large.

It is true that in some matrilineal societies, such as the Hopi of Arizona or the Ashanti of Ghana, men exert little authority over their wives. In some, such as the

Nayars of South India or the Minangkabau of Sumatra, men may even live separately from their wives and children, that is, in different families. In such societies, however, the fact is that women and children fall under greater or lesser authority from the women's kinsmen—their eldest brothers, mothers' brothers, or even their grown up sons.

In matrilineal societies, where property, rank, office, and group membership are inherited through the female line, it is true that women tend to have greater independence than in patrilineal societies. This is especially so in matrilineal tribal societies where the state has not yet developed, and especially in those tribal societies where residence is matrilocal—that is, men come to live in the homes or villages of their wives. Even so, in all matrilineal societies for which adequate descriptions are available, the ultimate headship of household, lineages, and local groups is usually with men.[2]

There is in fact no true "matriarchal," as distinct from "matrilineal," society in existence or known from literature, and the chances are that there never has been.[3] This does not mean that women and men never had relations that were dignified and creative for both sexes, appropriate to the knowledge, skills, and technology of their times. Nor does it mean that the sexes cannot be equal in the future, or that the sexual division of labor cannot be abolished. I believe that it can and must be. But it is not necessary to believe myths of a feminist Golden Age in order to plan for parity in the future.

PRIMATE SOCIETIES

Within the primate order, humans are most closely related to the anthropoid apes (the African chimpanzee and gorilla and the Southeast Asian orangutan and gibbon) and, of these, to the chimpanzee and the gorilla. More distantly related are the Old and then the New World monkeys, and finally the lemurs, tarsiers, and tree shrews.

All primates share characteristics without which the family could not have developed. The young are born relatively helpless. They suckle for several months or years and need prolonged care afterwards. Childhood is longer, the closer the species is to humans. Most monkeys reach puberty at about four to five and mature socially between about five and ten. Chimpanzees, by contrast, suckle for up to three years. Females reach puberty at seven to ten; males enter mature social and sexual relations as late as thirteen. The long childhood and maternal care produce close relations between children of the same mother, who play together and help tend their juniors until they grow up.

Monkeys and apes, like humans, mate in all months of the year instead of in a rutting season. Unlike humans, however, female apes experience unusually strong sexual desire for a few days shortly before and during ovulation (the oestrus period), and have intensive sexual relations at that time. The males are attracted to the females by their scent or by brightly colored swellings in the sexual region. Oestrus-mating appears to be especially pronounced in primate species more remote from humans. The apes and some monkeys carry on less intensive, month-round sexuality in addition to oestrus-mating, approaching human pat-terms more closely. In humans, sexual desires and relations are regulated less by hormonal changes and more by mental images, emotions, cultural rules, and individual preferences.

Year-round (if not always month-round) sexuality means that males and females socialize more continuously among primates than among most other mammals. All primates form bands or troops composed of both sexes plus children. The numbers and proportions of the sexes vary, and in some species an individual, a mother with her young, or a subsidiary troop of male juveniles may temporarily travel alone. But, in general, males and females socialize continually through mutual grooming[4] and playing as well as through frequent sex relations. Keeping close to the females, primate males play with their children and tend to protect both females and young from predators. A "division of labor" based on gender is thus already found in primate society between a female role of prolonged child care and a male role of defense. Males may also carry or take care of children briefly, and non-nursing females may fight. But a kind of generalized "fatherliness" appears in the protective role of adult males toward young, even in species where the sexes do not form long-term individual attachments.

SEXUAL BONDS AMONG PRIMATES

Some nonhuman primates do have enduring sexual bonds and restrictions, superficially similar to those in some human societies. Among gibbons a single male and female live together with their young. The male drives off other males and the female, other females. When a juvenile reaches puberty it is thought to leave or be expelled by the parent of the same sex and eventually find a mate elsewhere. Similar *de facto*, rudimentary "incest prohibitions" may have been passed on to humans from their prehuman ancestors and later codified and elaborated through language, moral custom, and law. Whether this is so may become clearer when we know more about the mating patterns of the other great apes, especially of our closest relatives, the chimpanzees. Present evidence suggests that male chimpanzees do not mate with their mothers.

Orangutans live in small, tree-dwelling groups like gibbons, but their forms are less regular. One or two mothers may wander alone with their young, mating at intervals with a male, or a male-female pair, or several juvenile males, may travel together.

Among mountain gorillas of Uganda, South Indian langurs, and hamadryas baboons of Ethiopia, a single, fully mature male mates with several females, especially in their oestrus periods. If younger adult males are present, the females may have occasional relations with them if the leader is tired or not looking.

Among East and South African baboons, rhesus macaques, and South American woolly monkeys, the troop is bigger, numbering up to two hundred. It contains a number of adult males and much larger number of females. The males are strictly ranked in terms of dominance based on both physical strength and intelligence. The more dominant males copulate intensively with the females during the latter's oestrus periods. Toward the end of oestrus a female may briefly attach herself to a single dominant male. At other times she may have relations with any male of higher or lower rank provided that those of higher rank permit it.

Among some baboons and macaques the young males travel on the outskirts of the group and have little access to females. Some macaques expel from the troop a proportion of the young males, who then form "bachelor troops." Bachelors may later form new troops with young females.

Other primates are more thoroughly promiscuous, or rather indiscriminate, in mating. Chimpanzees, and also South American howler monkeys, live in loosely structured groups, again (as in most monkey and ape societies) with a preponderance of females. The mother-child unit is the only stable group. The sexes copulate almost at random, and most intensively and indiscriminately during oestrus.

A number of well-known anthropologists have argued that various attitudes and customs often found in human societies are instinctual, rather than culturally learned, and come from our primate heritage. They include hierarchies of ranking among men, male political power over women, and the greater tendency of men to form friendships with one another, as opposed to women's tendencies to cling to a man.[5]

I cannot accept these conclusions and think that they stem from the male chauvinism of our own society. A "scientific" argument which states that all such features of female inferiority are instinctive is obviously a powerful weapon in maintaining the traditional family with male dominance. But, in fact, these features are *not* universal among nonhuman primates, including some of the most closely related to humans. Chimpanzees have a low degree of male dominance and male hierarchy and are sexually virtually indiscriminate. Gibbons have a kind of fidelity for both sexes and almost no male dominance or hierarchy. Howler monkeys are sexually indiscriminate and lack male hierarchies or dominance.

The fact is that among nonhuman primates male dominance and male hierarchies seem to be adaptations to particular environments, some of which did become genetically established through natural selection. Among humans, however, these features are present in variable degrees and are almost certainly learned, not inherited at all. Among nonhuman primates there are fairly general differences between those that live mainly in trees and those that live largely on the ground. The tree dwellers (for example gibbons, orangutans, South American howler and woolly monkeys) tend to have to defend themselves less against predators than do the ground dwellers (such as baboons, macaques, or gorillas). Where defense is important, males are much larger and stronger than females, exert dominance over females, and are strictly hierarchized and organized in relation to one another. Where defense is less important there is much less sexual dimorphism (difference in size between male and female), less or no male dominance, a less pronounced male hierarchy, and greater sexual indiscriminateness.

Comparatively speaking, humans have a rather small degree of sexual dimorphism, similar to [that found in] chimpanzees. Chimpanzees live much in trees but also partly on the ground, in forest or semiforest habitats. They build individual nests to sleep in, sometimes on the ground but usually in trees. They flee into trees from danger. Chimpanzees go mainly on all fours, but sometimes on two feet, and can use and make simple tools. Males are dominant, but not very dominant, over females. The rank hierarchy among males is unstable, and males often move between groups, which vary in size from two to fifty individuals. Food is vegetarian, supplemented with worms, grubs, or occasional small animals. A mother and her young form the only stable unit. Sexual relations are largely indiscriminate, but nearby males defend young animals from danger. The chances are that our prehuman ancestors had a similar social life. Morgan and Engels were probably right in concluding that we came from a state of "original promiscuity" before we were fully human.

HUMAN EVOLUTION

Judging from the fossil record, apes ancestral to humans, gorillas, and chimpanzees roamed widely in Asia, Europe, and Africa some twelve to twenty-eight million years ago. Toward the end of that period (the Miocene) one appears in North India and East Africa, Ramapithecus, who may be ancestral both to later hominids and to modern humans. His species were small like gibbons, walked upright on two feet, had human rather than ape corner-teeth, and therefore probably used hands rather than teeth to tear their food. From that time evolution toward humanness must have proceeded through various phases until the emergence of modern *Homo sapiens*, about 70,000 years ago.

In the Miocene period before Ramapithecus appeared, there were several time spans in which, over large areas, the climate became drier and subtropical forests dwindled or disappeared. A standard reconstruction of events, which I accept, is that groups of apes, probably in Africa, had to come down from the trees and adapt to terrestrial life. Through natural selection, probably over millions of years, they developed specialized feet for walking. Thus freed, the hands came to be used not only (as among apes) for grasping and tearing but also for regular carrying of objects such as weapons (which had hitherto been sporadic) or of infants (which had hitherto clung to their mothers' body hair).

The spread of indigestible grasses on the open savannahs may have encouraged, if it did not compel, the early ground dwellers to become active hunters rather than to simply forage for small, sick, or dead animals that came their way. Collective hunting and tool use involved group cooperation and helped foster the growth of language out of the call-systems of apes. Language meant the use of symbols to refer to events not present. It allowed greatly increased foresight, memory, planning, and division of tasks—in short, the capacity for human thought.

With the change to hunting, group territories became much larger. Apes range only a few thousand feet daily; hunters, several miles. But because their infants were helpless, nursing women could hunt only small game close to home. This then produced the sexual division of labor on which the human family has since been founded. Women elaborated upon ape methods of child care and greatly expanded foraging, which in most areas remained the primary and most stable source of food. Men improved upon ape methods of fighting off other animals and of group protection in general. They adapted these methods to hunting, using weapons which for millennia remained the same for the chase as for human warfare.

Out of the sexual division of labor came, for the first time, home life as well as group cooperation. Female apes nest with and provide foraged food for their infants. But adult apes do not cooperate in food getting or nest building. They build new nests each night wherever they may happen to be. With the development of a hunting-gathering complex, it became necessary to have a G.H.Q., or home. Men could bring meat to this place for several days' supply. Women and children could meet men there after the day's hunting, and could bring their vegetable produce for general consumption. Men, women, and children could build joint shelters, butcher meat, and treat skins for clothing.

Later, fire came into use for protection against wild animals, for lighting, and eventually for cooking. The hearth then provided the focus and symbol of home. With the development of cookery, some humans—chiefly women, and perhaps some children and old men—came to spend more time preparing nutrition so that all people need spend less time in chewing and tearing their food. Meals—already less frequent because of the change to a carnivorous diet—now became brief, periodic events instead of the long feeding sessions of apes.

The change to humanness brought two bodily changes that affected birth and child care. These were head size and the width of the pelvis. Walking upright produced a narrower pelvis to hold the guts in position. Yet, as language developed, brains and hence heads grew much bigger relative to body size. To compensate, humans are born at an earlier stage of growth than apes. They are helpless longer and require longer and more total care. This in turn caused early women to concentrate more on child care and less on defense than do female apes.

Language made possible not only a division and cooperation in labor but also all forms of tradition, rules, morality, and cultural learning. Rules banning sex relations among close kinfolk must have come very early. Precisely how or why they developed is unknown, but they had at least two useful functions. They helped to preserve order in the family as a cooperative unit by outlawing competition for mates. They also created bonds *between* families, or even between separate bands, and so provided a basis for wider cooperation in the struggle for livelihood and the expansion of knowledge.

It is not clear when all these changes took place. Climatic change with increased drought began regionally up to 28 million years ago. The divergence between prehuman and gorilla-chimpanzee stems had occurred in both Africa and India at least 12 million years ago. The prehuman stem led to the Australopithecenes of East and South Africa, about 1,750,000 years ago. These were pygmylike, two-footed, upright hominids with larger-than-ape brains, who made tools and probably hunted in savannah regions. It is unlikely that they knew the use of fire.

The first known use of fire is that of the cave-dwelling hominids (Sinanthropus, a branch of the Pithecanthropines) at Choukoutien near Peking, some half a million years ago during the second ice age. Fire was used regularly in hearths, suggesting cookery, by the time of the Acheulean and Mousterian cultures of Neanderthal man in Europe, Africa, and Asia before, during, and after the third ice age, some 150,000 to 100,000 years ago. These people, too, were often cave dwellers, and buried their dead ceremonially in caves. Cave dwelling by night as well as by day was probably, in fact, not safe for humans until fire came into use to drive away predators.

Most anthropologists conclude that home life, the family, and language had developed by the time of Neanderthal man, who was closely similar and may have been ancestral to modern *Homo sapiens*. At least two anthropologists, however, believe that the Australopithecenes already had language nearly two million years ago, while another thinks that language and incest prohibitions did not evolve until the time of *Homo sapiens* some 70,000 to 50,000 years ago.[6] I am myself inclined to think that family life built around tool use, the use of language, cookery, and a sexual division of labor, must have been established sometime between about 500,000 and 200,000 years ago.

HUNTERS AND GATHERERS

Most of the hunting and gathering societies studied in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries had technologies similar to those that were widespread in the Mesolithic period, which occurred about 15,000 to 10,000 years ago, after the ice ages ended but before cultivation was invented and animals domesticated.

Modern hunters live in marginal forest, mountain, arctic, or desert environments where cultivation is impracticable. Although by no means "primeval," the hunters of recent times do offer clues to the types of family found during that 99 percent of human history before the agricultural revolution. They include the Eskimo, many Canadian and South American Indian groups, the forest BaMbuti (pygmies) and the desert Bushmen of Southern Africa, the Kadir of South India, the Veddah of Ceylon, and the Andaman Islanders of the Indian Ocean. About 175 hunting and gathering cultures in Oceania, Asia, Africa, and America have been described in fair detail.

In spite of their varied environments, hunters share certain features of social life. They live in bands of about 20 to 200 people, the majority of bands having fewer than 50. Bands are divided into families, which may forage alone in some seasons. Hunters have simple but ingenious technologies. Bows and arrows, spears, needles, skin clothing, and temporary leaf or wood shelters are common. Most hunters do some fishing. The band forages and hunts in a large territory and usually moves camp often.

Social life is egalitarian. There is of course no state or organized government. Apart from religious shamans or magicians, the division of labor is based only on sex and age. Resources are owned communally; tools and personal possessions are freely exchanged. Everyone works who can. Band leadership goes to whichever man has the intelligence, courage, and foresight to command the respect of his fellows. Intelligent older women are also looked up to.

The household is the main unit of economic cooperation, with the men, women, and children dividing the labor and pooling their produce. In 97 percent of the 175 societies classified by G. P. Murdock, hunting is confined to men; in the other 3 percent it is chiefly a male pursuit. Gathering of wild plants, fruits, and nuts is women's work. In 60 percent of societies, only women gather, while in another 32 percent gathering is mainly feminine. Fishing is solely or mainly men's work in 93 percent of the hunting societies where it occurs.

For the rest, men monopolize fighting, although interband warfare is rare. Women tend children and shelters and usually do most of the cooking, processing, and storage of food. Women tend also to be foremost in the early household crafts such as basketry, leather work, the making of skin or bark clothing, and, in the more advanced hunting societies, pottery. (Considering that women probably *invented* all of these crafts, in addition to cookery, food storage and preservation, agriculture, spinning, weaving, and perhaps even house construction, it is clear that women played quite as important roles as men in early cultural development.) Building dwellings and making tools and ornaments are variously divided between the sexes, while boat building is largely done by men. Girls help the women, and boys play at hunting or hunt small game until they reach puberty, when both take on the roles of adults. Where the environment makes it desirable, the men of a whole band or of some smaller cluster of households cooperate in hunting or fishing and divide their spoils. Women of nearby families often go gathering together.

Family composition varies among hunters as it does in other kinds of societies. About half or more of known hunting societies have nuclear families (father, mother, and children), with polygynous households (a man, two or more wives, and children) as occasional variants. Clearly, nuclear families are the most common among hunters, although hunters have a slightly higher proportion of polygynous families than do nonhunting societies.

About a third of hunting societies contain some "stem-family" households—that is, older parents live together with one married child and grandchildren, while the other married children live in independent dwellings. A still smaller proportion live in large extended families containing several married brothers (or several married sisters), their spouses, and children.[7] Hunters have fewer extended and stem families than do nonhunting societies. These larger households become common with the rise of agriculture. They are especially found in large, preindustrial agrarian states such as ancient Greece, Rome, India, the Islamic empires, and China.

Hunting societies also have few households composed of a widow or divorcee and her children. This is understandable, for neither men nor women can survive long without the work and produce of the other sex, and marriage is the way to obtain them. That is why so often young men must show proof of hunting prowess, and girls of cooking, before they are allowed to marry.

The family, together with territorial grouping, provides the framework of society among hunters. Indeed, as Morgan and Engels clearly saw, kinship and territory are the foundations of all societies before the rise of the state. Not only hunting and gathering bands but also the larger and more complex tribes and chiefdoms of primitive cultivators and herders organize people through descent from common ancestors or through marriage ties between groups. Among hunters, things are simple. There is only the family, and beyond it the band. With the domestication of plants and animals, the economy becomes more productive. More people can live together. Tribes form, containing several thousand people loosely organized into large kin groups such as clans and lineages, each composed of a number of related families. With still further development of the productive forces the society throws up a central political leadership, together with craft specialization and trade, and so the chiefdom emerges. But this, too, is structured through ranked allegiances and marriage ties between kin groups.

Only with the rise of the state does class, independently of kinship, provide the basis for relations of production, distribution, and power. Even then, kin groups remain large in the agrarian state and kinship persists as the prime organizing principle within each class until the rise of capitalism. The reduction in significance of the family that we see today is the outgrowth of a decline in the importance of "familism" relative to other institutions, that began with the rise of the state but became speeded up with the development of capitalism and machine industry. In most modern socialist societies, the family is even less significant as an organizing principle. It is reasonable to suppose that in the future it will become minimal or may disappear at least as a legally constituted unit for exclusive forms of sexual and economic cooperation and of child care.

Morgan and Engels (1942) thought that from a state of original promiscuity, early humans at first banned sex relations between the generations of parents and children, but continued to allow them indiscriminately between brothers, sisters, and all kinds of cousins within the band. They called this the "consanguineal family." They thought that later, all mating within the family or some larger kin group became forbidden, but that there was a stage (the "punaluan") in which a group of sisters or other close kinswomen from one band were married jointly to a group of brothers or other close kinsmen from another. They thought that only later still, and especially with the domestication of plants and animals, did the "pairing family" develop in which each man was married to one or two women individually.

These writers drew their conclusions not from evidence of actual group marriage among primitive peoples but from the kinship terms found today in certain tribal and chiefly societies. Some of these equate all kin of the same sex in the parents' generation, suggesting brother-sister marriage. Others equate the father's brothers with the father, and the mother's sisters with the mother, suggesting the marriage of a group of brothers with a group of sisters.

Modern evidence does not bear out these conclusions about early society. All known hunters and gatherers live in families, not in communal sexual arrangements. Most hunters even live in nuclear families rather than in large extended kin groups. Mating is individualized, although one man may occasionally have two wives, or (very rarely) a woman may have two husbands. Economic life is built primarily around the division of labor and partnership between individual men and women. The hearths, caves, and other remains of Upper Paleolithic hunters suggest that this was probably an early arrangement. We cannot say that Engels's sequences are completely ruled out for very early hominids—the evidence is simply not available. But it is hard to see what economic arrangements among hunters would give rise to group rather than individual or "pairing" marriage arrangements, and this Engels does not explain.

Soviet anthropologists continued to believe in Morgan and Engels's early "stages" longer than did anthropologists in the West. Today, most Russian anthropologists admit the lack of evidence for "consanguineal" and "punaluan" arrangements, but some still believe that a different kind of group marriage intervened between indiscriminate mating and the pairing family. Semyonov, for example, argues that in the stage of group marriage, mating was forbidden within the hunting band, but that the men of two neighboring bands had multiple, visiting sex relations with women of the opposite band.[8]

While such an arrangement cannot be ruled out, it seems unlikely because many of the customs which Semyonov regards as "survivals" of such group marriage (for example, visiting husbands, matrilineage dwelling groups, widespread clans, multiple spouses for both sexes, men's and women's communal houses, and prohibitions of sexual intercourse inside the huts of the village) are actually found not so much among hunters as among horticultural tribes and even quite complex agricultural states. Whether or not such a stage of group marriage occurred in the earliest societies, there seems little doubt that pairing marriage (involving family households) came about with the development of elaborate methods of hunting, cooking, and the preparation of clothing and shelters—that is, with a fully fledged division of labor.

Even so, there *are* some senses in which mating among hunters has more of a group character than in archaic agrarian states or in capitalist society. Murdock's sample shows that sex relations before marriage are strictly prohibited in only 26 percent of hunting societies. In the rest, marriage is either arranged so early that premarital sex is unlikely, or (more usually) sex relations are permitted more or less freely before marriage.

With marriage, monogamy is the normal *practice* at any given time for most hunters, but it is not the normal *rule*. Only 19 percent in Murdock's survey prohibit plural unions. Where polygyny is found (79 percent) the most common type is for a man to marry two sisters or other closely related women of the same kin group—for example, the daughters of two sisters or of two brothers. When a woman dies it is common for a sister to replace her in the marriage, and when a man dies, for a brother to replace him.

Similarly, many hunting societies hold that the wives of brothers or other close kinsmen are in some senses wives of the group. They can be called on in emergencies [times of illness]. Again, many hunting societies have special times for sexual license between men and women of a local group who are not married to each other, such as the "lights out" games of Eskimos sharing a communal snow-house. In other situations, an Eskimo wife will spend the night with a chance guest of her husband's. All parties expect this as normal hospitality. Finally, adultery, although often punished, tends to be common in hunting societies, and few if any of them forbid divorce or the remarriage of divorcees and widows.

The reason for all this seems to be that marriage and sexual restrictions are practical arrangements among hunters designed mainly to serve economic and survival needs. In these societies, some kind of rather stable pairing best accomplishes the division of labor and cooperation of men and women and the care of children. Beyond the immediate family, either a larger family group or the whole band has other, less intensive but important, kinds of cooperative activities. Therefore, the husbands and wives of individuals within that group can be summoned to stand in for each other if need arises. In the case of Eskimo wife-lending, the extreme climate and the need for lone wandering in search of game dictate high standards of hospitality. This evidently becomes extended to sexual sharing.

In the case of sororal polygyny or marriage to the dead wife's sister, it is natural that when two women fill the same role—either together or in sequence—they should be sisters, for sisters are more alike than other women. They are likely to care more for each other's children. The replacement of a dead spouse by a sister or a brother also preserves existing intergroup relations. For the rest, where the economic and survival bonds of marriage are not at stake, people can afford to be freely companionate and tolerant. Hence premarital sexual freedom, seasonal group license, and a pragmatic approach to adultery.

Marriages among hunters are usually arranged by elders when a young couple are ready for adult responsibilities. But the couple know each other and usually have some choice. If the first marriage does not work, the second mate will almost certainly be self-selected. Both sexual and companionate love between individual men and women are known and are deeply experienced. With comparative freedom of mating, love is often less separated from or opposed to marriage than in archaic states or even in some modern nations.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN

Even in hunting societies it seems that women are always in some sense the "second sex," with greater or less subordination to men. This varies. Eskimo and Australian aboriginal women are far more subordinate than women among the Kadir, the Andamanese, or the Congo Pygmies—all forest people.

I suggest that women have greater power and independence among hunters when they are important food-obtainers than when they are mainly processors of meat or other supplies provided by men. The former situation is likelier to exist in societies where hunting is small-scale and intensive than where it is extensive over a large terrain, and in societies where gathering is important by comparison with hunting.

In general in hunting societies, however, women are less subordinated in certain crucial respects than they are in most, if not all, of the archaic states, or even in some capitalist nations. These respects include men's ability to deny women sexuality or to force it upon them; to command or exploit their labor or to control their produce; to control or rob them of their children; to confine them physically and prevent their movement; to use them as objects in male transactions; to cramp their creativeness; or to withhold from them large areas of the society's knowledge and cultural attainments.

Especially lacking in hunting societies is the kind of male possessiveness and exclusiveness regarding women that leads to such institutions as savage punishments or death for female adultery, the jealous guarding of female chastity and virginity, the denial of divorce to women, or the ban on a woman's remarriage after her husband's death.

For these reasons, I do not think we can speak, as some writers do, of a class division between men and women in hunting societies. True, men are more mobile than women, and they lead in public affairs. But class society requires that one class control the means of production, dictate its use by the other classes, and expropriate the surplus. These conditions do not exist among hunters. Land and other resources are held communally, although women may monopolize certain gathering areas, and men, their hunting grounds. There is rank difference, role difference, and some difference respecting degrees of authority, between the sexes, but there is reciprocity rather than domination or exploitation.

As Engels saw, the power of men to exploit women systematically springs from the existence of surplus wealth and, more directly, from the state, social stratification, and the control of property by men. With the rise of the state, because of their monopoly over weapons, and because freedom from child care allows them to enter specialized economic and political roles, some men—especially ruling-class men—acquire power over other men and over women. Almost all men acquire it over women of their own or lower classes, especially within their own kinship groups. These kinds of male power are shadowy among hunters.

To the extent that men *have* power over women in hunting societies, this seems to spring from the male monopoly of heavy weapons, from the particular division of labor between the sexes, or both. Although men seldom use weapons against women, they *possess* them (or possess superior weapons) in addition to their physical strength. This does give men an ultimate control of force. When old people or babies must be killed to ensure band or family survival, it is usually men who kill them. Infanticide—rather common among hunters, who must limit the mouths to feed—is more often female infanticide than male.

The hunting of men seems more often to require them to organize in groups than does the work of women. Perhaps because of this, about 60 percent of hunting societies have predominantly virilocal residence. That is, men choose which band to live in (often, their fathers'), and women move with their husbands. This gives a man advantages over his wife in terms of familiarity and loyalties, for the wife is often a stranger. Sixteen to 17 percent of hunting societies are, however, uxorilocal, with men moving to the households of their wives, while 15 to 17 percent are bilocal—that is, either sex may move in with the other on marriage.

Probably because of male cooperation in defense and hunting, men are more prominent in band councils and leadership, in medicine and magic, and in public rituals designed to increase game, to ward off sickness, or to initiate boys into manhood. Women do, however, often take part in band councils; they are not excluded from law and government as in many agrarian states. Some women are respected as wise leaders, storytellers, doctors, or magicians, or are feared as witches. Women have their own ceremonies of fertility, birth, and healing, from which men are often excluded.

In some societies, although men control the most sacred objects, women are believed to have discovered them. Among the Congo Pygmies, religion centers about a beneficent spirit, the Animal of the Forest. It is represented by wooden trumpets that are owned and played by men. Their possession and use are hidden from the women, and they are played at night when hunting is bad, someone falls ill, or death occurs. During the playing men dance in the public campfire, which is sacred and is associated with the forest. Yet the men believe that women originally owned the trumpet and that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or from the forest spirit. When a woman has failed to bear children for several years, a special ceremony is held. Women lead in the songs that usually accompany the trumpets, and an old woman kicks apart the campfire. Temporary female dominance seems to be thought necessary to restore fertility.

In some hunting societies women are exchanged between local groups, which are thus knit together through marriages. Sometimes men of different bands directly exchange their sisters. More often there is a generalized exchange of women between two or more groups or a one-way movement of women within a circle of groups. Sometimes the husband's family pays weapons, tools, or ornaments to the wife's in return for the wife's services and, later, her children.

In such societies, although they may be well treated and their consent sought, women are clearly the movable partners in an arrangement controlled by men. Male anthropologists have seized on this as evidence of original male dominance and patrilocal residence. Fox and others, for example, have argued that, until recently, *all* hunting societies formed out-marrying patrilocal bands, linked together politically by the exchange of women. The fact that fewer than two-thirds of hunting societies are patrilocal today, and only 41 percent have band exogamy, is explained in terms of modern conquest, economic change, and depopulation.

I cannot accept this formula. It is true that modern hunting societies have been severely changed, decultured, and often depopulated, by capitalist imperialism. I can see little evidence, however, that the ones that are patrilocal today have undergone less change than those that are not. It is hard to believe that in spite of enormous environmental diversity and the passage of thousands, perhaps millions, of years, hunting societies all had band exogamy with patrilocal residence until they were disturbed by western imperialism. It is more likely that early band societies, like later agricultural tribes, developed variety in family life and the status of women as they spread over the earth.

There is also some likelihood that the earliest hunters had matrilocal rather than patrilocal families. Among apes and monkeys, it is almost always males who leave the troop or are driven out. Females stay closer to their mothers and their original site; males move about, attaching themselves to females where availability and competition permit. Removal of the wife to the husband's home or band may have been a relatively late development in societies where male cooperation in hunting assumed overwhelming importance.[9] Conversely, after the development of horticulture (which was probably invented and is mainly carried out by women), those tribes in which horticulture predominated over stock raising were most likely to be or to remain matrilocal and to develop matrilineal descent groups with a relatively high status of women. But, where extensive hunting of large animals or, later, the herding of large domesticates predominated, patrilocal residence flourished, and women were used to form alliances between male-centered groups. With the invention of metallurgy and of agriculture as distinct from horticulture after 4000 B.C., men came to control agriculture and many crafts, and most of the great agrarian states had patrilocal residence with patriarchal, male-dominated families.

CONCLUSIONS

The family is a human institution, not found in its totality in any prehuman species. It required language, planning, cooperation, self-control, foresight, and cultural learning, and probably developed along with these.

The family was made desirable by the early human combination of prolonged child care with the need for hunting with weapons over large terrains. The sexual division of labor on which it was based grew out of a rudimentary prehuman division between male defense and female child care. But among humans this sexual division of functions for the first time became crucial for food production and so laid the basis for future economic specialization and cooperation.

Morgan and Engels were probably right in thinking that the human family was preceded by sexual indiscriminateness. They were also right in seeing an egalitarian group quality about early economic and marriage arrangements. They were without evidence, however, in believing that the earliest mating and economic patterns were entirely group relations.

Together with extensive tool use and language, the family was no doubt the most significant invention of the human evolution. All three required reflective thought, which above all accounts for the vast superiority in consciousness that separates humans from apes.

The family provided the framework for all pre-state society and the fount of its creativeness. In groping for survival and for knowledge, human beings learned to control their sexual desires and to suppress their individual selfishness, aggression, and competition. The other side of this self-control was an increased capacity for love—not only the love of a mother for her child, which is seen among apes, but also of male for female in enduring relationships, and of each sex for ever-widening groups of humans. Civilization would have been impossible without this initial self-control, seen in incest prohibitions and in the generosity and moral orderliness of primitive family life.

From the start, women have been subordinate to men in certain key areas of status, mobility, and public leadership. But before the agricultural revolution, and even for several thousands of years thereafter, the inequality was based chiefly on the unalterable fact of prolonged child care combined with the exigencies of primitive technology. The extent of inequality varied according to the ecology and the resulting sexual division of tasks. But in any case it was largely a matter of survival rather than of man-made cultural impositions. Hence the impressions we receive of dignity, freedom, and mutual respect between men and women in primitive hunting and horticultural societies. This is true whether these societies are patrilocal, bilocal, or matrilocal, although matrilocal societies, with matrilineal inheritance, offer greater freedom to women than do patrilocal and patrilineal societies of the same level of productivity and political development.

A distinct change occurred with the growth of individual and family property in herds, in durable craft objects and trade objects, and in stable, irrigated farm sites or other forms of heritable wealth. This crystallized in the rise of the state, about 4000 B.C. With the growth of class society and of male dominance in the ruling class of the state, women's subordination increased and eventually reached its depths in the patriarchal families of the great agrarian states.

Knowledge of how the family arose is interesting to women because it tells us how we differ from prehumans, what our past has been, and what have been the biological and cultural limitations from which we are emerging. It shows us how generations of male scholars have distorted or overinterpreted the evidence to bolster beliefs in the inferiority of women's mental processes—for which there is no foundation in fact. Knowing about early families is also important to correct a reverse bias among some feminist writers, who hold that in "matriarchal" societies women were completely equal with or were even dominant over men. For this, too, there seems to be no basis in evidence.

The past of the family does not limit its future. Although the family probably emerged with humanity, neither the family itself nor particular family forms are genetically determined. The sexual division of labor—until recently, universal—need not, and in my opinion should not, survive in industrial society. Prolonged child care ceases to be a basis for female subordination when artificial birth control, spaced births, small families, patent feeding, and communal nurseries allow it to be shared by men. Automation and cybernation remove most of the heavy work for which women are less well equipped than men. The exploitation of women that came with the rise of the state and of class society will presumably disappear in post-state, classless society—for which the technological and scientific basis already exists.

The family was essential to the dawn of civilization, allowing a vast qualitative leap forward in cooperation, purposive knowledge, love, and creativeness. But today the confinement of women in homes and small families—like their subordination in work—artificially limits these human capacities [rather than enhancing them]. It may be that the human gift for personal love will make some form of voluntary, long-term mating and of individual devotion between parents and children continue indefinitely, side by side with public responsibility for domestic tasks and for the care and upbringing of children. There is no need to legislate personal relations out of existence. But neither need we fear a social life in which the family is no more.

NOTES

1. Editor's Note: The full original title of this volume is *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums und des Staats. Im Anschluss an Lewis H. Morgan's Forschungen* (Hottingen-Zurich, 1884). It is based on Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society; Or, Researches in the Lines of Human Progess from Savagery, through Barbarism to Civilization* (New York, 1877). Ms. Gough has consulted the English translation of the Engels work: *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State in the Light of the Researches of Lewis H. Morgan*, 4th ed. (New York and London, 1942); this is the work referred to in her article as "Morgan and Engels."
2. See David M. Schneider and Kathleen Gough, eds., *Matrilineal Kinship* (Berkeley, Calif., 1961), for common and variant features of matrilineal systems.

3. The Iroquois are often quoted as a "matriarchal" society, but in fact Morgan himself refers to "the absence of equality between the sexes" and notes that women were subordinate to men, they ate after men, and women (not men) were publicly whipped as punishment for adultery. Warleaders, tribal chiefs, and *sachems* (heads of matrilineal lineages) were men. Women did, however, have a large say in the government of the long-house or home of the matrilocal extended family, and women figured as tribal counsellors and religious officials, as well as in arranging marriages. Lewis H. Morgan: The League of the *Ho-de-ne Sau-nee* or *Iroquois*, Human Relations Area Files, 1954.
4. Combing the hair and removing parasites with hands or teeth.
5. See, for example, Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape* [Dell, 1969]; Robin Fox, *Kinship and Marriage* [Penguin, 1968]. [Editor's Note: see also Lionel Tiger, *Men in Groups* (Random House, 1969).]
6. For the former view, see Charles F. Hockett and Robert Ascher, "The Human Revolution," in Yehudi A. Cohen, ed., *Man in Adaptation: The Biosocial Background* (Aldine, 1968); for the latter, Frank B. Livingstone, "Genetics, Ecology and the Origin of Incest and Exogamy," *Current Anthropology*, February 1969.
7. For exact figures, see G. P. Murdock, *World Ethnographic Sample*, American Anthropologist, 1957; Allan D. Coult, *Cross Tabulations of Murdock's World Ethnographic Sample*, University of Missouri, 1965; and G. P. Murdock, *Ethnographic Atlas*, University of Pittsburgh, 1967. In the last-named survey, out of 175 hunting societies, 47 percent had nuclear family households, 38 percent had stem families, and 14 percent had extended families.
8. Y. I. Semyonov, "Group Marriage, Its Nature and Role in the Evolution of Marriage and Family Relations," *Seventh International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences*, vol. 4 (Moscow, 1967).
9. Upper Paleolithic hunters produced female figurines that were obvious emblems of fertility. The cult continued through the Mesolithic and into the Neolithic period. Goddesses and spirits of fertility are found in some patrilineal as well as matrilineal societies, but they tend to be more prominent in the latter. It is thus possible that in many areas even late Stone Age hunters had matrilocal residence and perhaps matrilineal descent, and that in some regions this pattern continued through the age of horticulture and even—as in the case of the Nayars of Kerola and the Minangkabau of Sumatra—into the age of plow agriculture, of writing, and of the small-scale state.

LETITIA ANNE PEPLAU

Power in dating relationships

Americans are sentimental about love. In thinking about romance, we emphasize intimacy and caring; we like to view our lover and the relationship as unique. We deemphasize the part that cultural values and social roles play in determining whom we love and how we conduct ourselves with them.[1] In particular we neglect a crucial aspect of love relationships—power. This article investigates that facet of romance and how traditional sex roles often tip the balance of power in favor of men.

The traditional formula for dating relationships has two basic themes. First, the man is expected to take the initiative. He asks the woman out, plans activities, provides transportation, and pays the bills. Second, our society's concept of "male superiority" dictates that a woman should "look up" to the significant man in her life, a stance that is facilitated by his usually being taller, older, and more sophisticated.[2] Feminists have severely criticized this viewpoint. In *Sexual Politics*,[3] Kate Millet argues that patriarchal norms are pervasive and insidious. While male domination may be seen most easily in business, education, religion, or politics, it also extends to personal relationships between the sexes. The family helps perpetuate the power imbalance by teaching children to accept the superior status of men.

In Millet's analysis, romantic love does not elevate the status of women. Rather, the ideology of love hides the reality of women's subordination and economic dependence on men. As television commercials readily illustrate, "love" can be used for the emotional manipulation of women. It is "love" that justifies household drudgery, as well as deference to men. Thus, true equality would require basic changes in the intimate relationships of women and men.

Although traditional views of romantic relationships are under attack, proponents of the old pattern remain strong. A striking example is provided by Helen Andelin, author of *Fascinating Womanhood*[4] and an advocate of a benevolent form of male dominance. In her book and in classes on Fascinating Womanhood

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This article is based on a large-scale research project directed by Zick Rubin in collaboration with Charles T. Hill and the author.

around the country, Andelin urges women to accept and enjoy traditional sex roles. Male leadership is a key element.

According to Andelin, women should defer to men and take pleasure in being cared for. The man is "the undisputed head of the family." The woman has a "submissive role, a supporting role and sometimes an active role. . . . But, first she must accept him as her leader, support and obey him."[5] The popularity of *Fascinating Womanhood* indicates that many women endorse this traditional view.

Young couples today are confronted with alternative models for power in romantic relationships. Traditional sex roles prescribe that the man should take the lead. But contemporary thinking favors a more equal balance of power. The research reported in this paper explores the attitudes of a diverse group of student couples about power and assesses the balance of power in each couple's relationship. It also examines factors that affected whether or not couples actually achieved equal power in their relationship.[6]

THE EGALITARIAN IDEAL

The college students in our sample were staunch supporters of an egalitarian balance of power. When we asked, "Who do you think should have more say about your relationship, your partner or you?" 95 percent of women and 87 percent of men indicated that dating partners should have "exactly equal say." While male dominance may once have been the favored pattern of male–female relations, it was overwhelmingly rejected by the students in this study. It is possible that some students gave the answer they considered socially desirable, rather than their own true opinion. In either case, however, responses indicated a striking change in the type of male–female relationship considered appropriate.

Although students advocated equality, they seldom reported having grown up in an egalitarian family. As one student explained:

> When I was growing up, my father was the Supreme Court in our family. He ran the show. My relationship with Betsy is very different, very egalitarian. We try to discuss things and reach consensus. And that's the way I think it should be.

Only 18 percent of students reported that their parents shared equally in power. A 53 percent majority indicated that the father had more say; the remaining 29 percent reported that the mother had more say. Our data indicated that college students were seeking a different type of relationship from the model set by their parents. A key question was whether those student couples would be successful in achieving the equal-power relationship they desired.

ASSESSING THE BALANCE OF POWER

Although the word *power* suggests a phenomenon that is obvious and easy to study, this is not the case.[7] Power is often elusive, especially in close relationships. Consider a woman who appears to dominate her boyfriend by deciding what to do on dates, determining which friends the couple sees, and even selecting the boyfriend's new clothes. Is it reasonable to infer that she has a good deal of power in the relationship? Not necessarily. Further investigation might reveal that her boyfriend, a busy pre-med student, disdains such "trivial" matters, and cheerfully delegates decision making in these areas to his girlfriend. Additionally, he may retain veto power on all decisions but rarely exercise it, because his girlfriend scrupulously caters to his preferences. In this instance, greater power may actually reside with the man, who delegates responsibility, rather than with the woman, who merely implements his preferences.[8]

Power—one person's ability to influence the behavior of another—cannot be directly observed, but must be inferred from actual behavior. The context in which an action occurs and the intentions of the participants largely determine the meaning of the act. Especially in close personal relationships, judgments about power may be difficult to make. In order to assess power in our couples, we asked very general questions about the overall balance of power, as well as more specific questions about particular situations and events.

Despite their support for equality, only 49 percent of the women and 42 percent of the men reported equal power. When the relationship was unequal, it was usually the man who had more say. About 45 percent of the men and 35 percent of the women reported that the man had more say, compared to 13 percent and 17 percent respectively who said the woman had more say. Clearly, the relationships these students had were often more traditional than the ideals they espoused.

In answer to more specific questions about power, a similar pattern emerged. Students were asked which partner had more say in five important areas of their relationship: recreation, conversation, sexual activity, amount of time spent together, and activities with other people. In each of these areas, fewer than half the students reported equal power.

More specific questions about hypothetical situations supported these data. For instance, the partners want to go to a movie, but disagree about which film to see. About one-third of the students reported that they as a couple would do what the man wanted, one-third what the woman wanted, and one-third were uncertain.

A second situation involved whose friends to go out with:

> You and (   ) are trying to decide how you as a couple will spend the weekend. You really want the two of you to go out with some of your friends, but (   ) wants just as strongly for the two of you to go out with some of his/her friends. Obviously you can't go out with both sets of friends at once. Whom do you as a couple decide to go out with?

Answers to this question showed an interesting sex difference. Half the women were sure that the couple would go out with the man's friends; only 13 percent thought they would go out with the woman's friends. In contrast, half of the men were undecided about what would happen; 25 percent thought they would go out with the man's friends, and the other 25 percent thought they would go out with the woman's friends. Thus women more often predict a traditional pattern in which the man determines whom the couple sees. Men reflect greater uncertainty, and they are equally likely to believe that the man or the woman would decide.

Our data also suggested that women may exercise major influence over whether the couple has sexual intercourse or not. At the time of our first questionnaire, slightly over 40 couples were not having intercourse with each other. The major reason given for this was that the woman preferred not to. Further, when we compared women who were not having intercourse to those who were, we found that the no-intercourse women were twice as likely to describe themselves as having greater overall power in the relationship and less likely to report male power.

Many students told us that the simplistic alternatives we offered (e.g., do what he wants versus do what she wants) did not adequately describe their own behavior. Some said they would compromise about which movie to see; others indicated they would take turns, seeing one movie this week and another next week. In some instances, students said they would take other factors into account, such as their partner's mood, or which partner had most recently had his or her own way about something else. No one decision or event provides a clear indication of the balance of power. As expected, however, people's overall assessment of the balance of power was significantly related to their reports of power in specific situations.

In summary, we have found that fewer than half the student couples in our study believed they had achieved an equal-power relationship. This was true both for a measure of general power and for reports of power in particular areas. On balance, one person is seen as having greater overall influence in over half the couples in our study.

TIPPING THE BALANCE OF POWER

Why is it that students who want to have an egalitarian relationship are not successful in achieving one? Our analyses indicated several important factors that affected the balance of power in dating relationships: sex-role attitudes, unequal involvement and personal resources, and the woman's career aspirations.

Sex-Role Attitudes

While most students endorsed an ideal of equal power, they varied considerably in their more general attitudes about proper behavior for men and women. Our questionnaire included a ten-item Sex-Role Attitude Scale. Students indicated their agreement or disagreement with such statements as, "If a couple is going somewhere by car, it's better for the man to do most of the driving" and "If both husband and wife work full-time, her career should be just as important as his in determining where the family lives." Responses indicated that some students took staunchly traditional positions, others endorsed strongly feminist positions, and many fell somewhere in between. Dating partners generally held similar attitudes; it was unusual to find an ardent traditionalist dating a feminist partner.

While traditional sex-role attitudes were often associated with unequal relationships, there were important exceptions (see table 1). For example, over one-third of the most traditional couples reported equal power, as Paul and Peggy illustrate. For them, power was not a prominent issue. While Peggy was considered the expert on cooking and social skills, Paul made decisions about what to do on dates. They divided responsibilities in a traditional way but believed that

TABLE 1 Balance of power for traditional, moderate, and liberal couples

Type of Couple	Woman's report			Man's report		
	Man more	Equal	Woman more	Man more	Equal	Woman more
Traditionals (72 couples)	43%	47%	10%	59%	31%	10%
Moderates (73 couples)	37%	45%	18%	51%	34%	15%
Liberals (76 couples)	24%	51%	25%	25%	62%	13%

overall they had equal power. Nor did all nontraditional couples have equal-power relationships; about 25 percent reported that the man had more say.

In summary, sex-role attitudes often have an important impact on the balance of power in dating relationships. Believing that men and women can perform similar tasks, acknowledging that the woman's career is as important as the man's, and other nontraditional attitudes can foster an equal-power relationship. At the same time, it is also likely that having an egalitarian relationship encourages nontraditional sex-role attitudes. The relationship between these factors can work both ways.

Imbalance of Involvement and Resources

Social-psychological theory[9] suggests that power in a couple is affected by each partner's dependence on the relationship. One partner may be passionately in love, while the other partner has only a lukewarm interest in the relationship. Such imbalances of involvement are likely to affect the balance of power. Sociologist Willard Waller described this phenomenon as the "principle of least interest," which predicts that the person who is least involved or interested in a relationship will have greater influence. The more involved person, eager to maintain the relationship, will defer to the partner's wishes. Thus the less interested partner is better able to set the terms of the relationship and exert control. Being deeply in love is a wonderful experience. But unless love and commitment are reciprocated, they make a person vulnerable to their partner's influence.

Our questionnaire contained several measures of love and involvement. One question asked straightforwardly, "Who do you think is more involved in your relationship—your partner or you?" Less than half the students reported that their relationship was equal in involvement (see table 2). The principle of least interest was strongly supported by our data. In couples where the man was the least involved, it was most common for the man to have more power. In contrast, when the woman was the least involved, nearly half the couples reported that the woman had greater power (see table 3).

Attraction to a partner and involvement in a relationship are affected by

TABLE 2 Differences in involvement in relationship

Relative involvement	Woman's report	Man's report
Equal involvement	48%	43%
Man more involved	28%	15%
Woman more involved	24%	42%

many factors. The degree to which we find our partner highly desirable and rewarding is very important, as is our assessment of the possible alternative relationships available to both of us. If our present partner is more desirable than the available alternatives, our attraction should remain high. Thus such personal resources as physical attractiveness, social skills, prestige, or money affect the balance of power.

Findings concerning physical attractiveness and alternative dating partners illustrate the pattern we found. Although we may like to think that inner qualities are more important than physical appearance, there is ample evidence that beauty can be a valuable resource in interpersonal relations.[10] As part of our study, we took full-length color photos of each participant, and then had these rated on physical attractiveness by a panel of student judges. As predicted, if one person was judged more attractive, she or he was likely to have more say in the relationship.

The more options a person has about alternative dating relationships, the less dependent he or she is on a single partner. We asked students whether they had either dated or had sexual intercourse with someone other than their partner during the past two months. We also inquired if there was a "specific other" they could be dating at present. For both men and women, having dating alternatives was related to having greater power in the current relationship.

Our analysis suggests that a possible way to increase one's relative power in a relationship is to acquire new personal resources or greater options. This message is conveyed, in highly different forms, by both *Fascinating Womanhood* and the women's movement. *Fascinating Womanhood* promises women a happier mar-

TABLE 3 Relationship of power and involvement

	Relative involvement		
Relative power	Woman less involved (60 couples)	Equal (57 couples)	Man less involved (100 couples)
Man more say	23%	54%	70%
Equal say	28%	20%	20%
Woman more say	49%	26%	10%

riage by learning to be more "feminine." Women are encouraged to pay greater attention to their husband, improve their appearance, become better cooks, learn to be more sexually attractive and, in general, improve their "feminine" skills. By increasing her own desirability, the woman may indirectly increase her husband's interest in their relationship. As a result, the husband may be more willing to defer to his wife's wishes and concerns. While endorsing a pattern of male leadership and control, *Fascinating Womanhood* nonetheless suggests ways for women to work within the traditional pattern to achieve their own goals.

Contemporary feminists have rejected inequality between the sexes and encouraged women to become less dependent on men. This can be achieved by developing closer relationships with other women and by learning new skills, especially "masculine" skills such as car repair or plumbing. The greatest emphasis has been given to women's gaining financial independence through paid employment. In the next section, data from our study bearing on the impact of women's careers on power in dating relationships are presented.

Women's Career Goals

It is traditionally common for men to divide their interest and energy between personal relationships and work. For women, in contrast, a family and a career have often been viewed as incompatible goals. Typically, women have given far higher priority to personal and family relationships than to paid employment. Many of the college students in our study rejected the idea that the woman's place is in the home; both men and women expressed more favorable attitudes toward careers for women. What impact does this have on power in male–female relationships?

Full-time paid employment makes women more similar to men in several ways. Work provides women with additional skills and expertise, with important interests outside the relationship, and with additional resources such as income or prestige. For all these reasons, it seems likely that a woman's employment might affect power in a dating relationship.

Leonard and Felicia, two of our participants, illustrate this effect. They met and were married in college, where both majored in music. The couple agrees that while Felicia is a competent musician, Leonard is a musical genius on his way to becoming a famous composer. After college, Felicia took a job as a music teacher to put her husband through graduate school. She acknowledged his superior ability and was willing to support his career by working. But she views her job strictly as a necessity. Her primary involvement is in her marriage. Leonard's job attitude is completely different. Felicia says bluntly: "For him, music comes first and I'm second. If he had to move to New York to be famous and I wouldn't go, he'd leave me." In part because of this imbalance of involvement, Leonard has greater power in their relationship. He determines where they live, for instance, and requires Felicia to tolerate his sexual infidelities.

During the past year there has been a great deal of strain in the relationship. Partly because of this, Felicia took a summer school course in a new method of teaching music. She found the course exciting, and during the summer she gained greater confidence in her abilities as a music teacher. She became seriously interested in teaching as a career. With the support of other women in the class, Felicia decided to apply for admission to a graduate program in the new instructional method. In long talks with other women, she reexamined her ideas about marriage, sex roles, and her career. She realized that "the fantasy of having a man fulfill a woman is a dangerous myth. You have to fulfill yourself." Despite some objections from Leonard, Felicia intends to start graduate school in the fall. She feels that these changes have already helped her marriage and changed the balance of power. "If I'd gone on working this year to support him, as Len wanted me to, he'd be the more dominant. . . . If I hadn't decided to go to school, he'd be taking the money and running the show." Having made her decision, Felicia feels less dominated and exploited by her husband. She hopes that, as she gains more respect for her own abilities, Len will gain respect for her, too.

This is only an example. We asked all the couples about their educational and career plans. Nearly 70 percent of both men and women said they planned on going to graduate school. Among those seeking advanced degrees, women were more likely than men to desire only a master's degree (50 percent of women versus 32 percent of men). Men were more likely than women to aspire to a doctorate or the equivalent (38 percent of men versus 19 percent of women). Additional questions probed students' attitudes about full-time employment for women and their own support for a dual-career marriage in which both spouses have full-time careers.

As expected, the woman's educational and career plans were significantly related to the balance of power in the current relationship. For instance, in one analysis we examined the relationship between the highest degree the woman aspired to and the balance of power. The results were striking. When the woman aspired to less than a bachelor's degree, 87 percent of students reported that the man had more power in their relationship. When the woman planned to complete her B.A., about half (45 percent) reported that the man had more power. And, when the woman planned on an advanced degree, only about 30 percent reported that the man had more say. As the woman's educational aspirations increased, the likelihood of a male-dominant relationship decreased sharply. In contrast, no relationship was found between the man's educational aspirations or career plans and power.

OVERVIEW

We have found that power in a dating relationship is related to sex-role attitudes, to the balance of involvement and resources, and to the woman's career plans. For women, these three factors were interrelated. Women who planned on graduate school reported relatively less involvement in their current relationship, had more liberal sex-role attitudes (and tended to date men who were also more liberal), and often planned to make a major commitment to a full-time career, as well as to marriage.

For men, educational plans, sex-role attitudes, and relative involvement were *not* related. Liberal and traditional men did not differ in their educational goals or in their relative involvement in the current relationship. In American society, all men are expected to work. This is as true for men who reject traditional roles as for men who support them. Although the man's educational plans did not affect the balance of power, his own sex-role attitudes and his relative involvement in the relationship were important determinants of power.

While many women in our sample wanted to pursue a career, they did not see this as a substitute for marriage. About 96 percent of women and 95 percent of men said they expected to marry eventually, although not necessarily this partner. Further, 90 percent of women and 93 percent of men said they wanted to have one or more children. What distinguished traditional and liberal women was not their intention to marry but rather their orientation toward employment. It remains to be seen, of course, whether the women we studied will follow through on their plans for advanced degrees and full-time employment.

POWER TACTICS

Traditional sex roles dictate not only that the man should have more power but also that the sexes should exert influence in different ways. While men are direct, even bold in their leadership, women are expected to be more subtle and covert. *Fascinating Womanhood* offers several suggestions for giving "feminine advice":

> *Ask leading questions:* A subtle way of giving advice is to ask leading questions, such as "Have you ever thought of doing it this way?" . . . The key word is *you*. In this way you bring him into the picture so the ideas will seem like his own.
>
> *Insight:* When expressing your viewpoint use words that indicate insight such as "I feel." Avoid the words "I think" or "I know."
>
> *Don't appear to know more than he does:* Don't be the all-wise, all-knowing wife who has all the answers and surpasses her husband in intelligence.
>
> *Don't talk man to man:* Don't "hash things over" as men do and thereby place yourself on an equal plane with him. . . . Keep him in the dominant position so that he will feel needed and adequate as the leader.[11]

Sociologists have taken note of these differences in male and female styles of power. In fact, Jessie Bernard suggests that in many marriages male control may be only an illusion:

> From time immemorial, despite the institutional pattern conferring authority on husbands, whichever spouse had the talent for running the show did so. If the wife was the power in the marriage, she exerted her power in a way that did not show; she did not flaunt it, she was satisfied with the "power-behind-the-throne" position.[12]

This "Lady Macbeth syndrome" is a familiar, and often acceptable, pattern. Jokes about henpecked husbands ridicule not only the man who lacks control but also the wife who foolishly exposes her true power.

Recent research by Paula Johnson[13] has systematically explored sex differences in power strategies. She simulated a work situation in which one student was to supervise the work of a partner. At one point the supervisor was asked to tell the partner to "sort faster," but was given a choice of six ways to make this request. Students conformed to traditional expectations. Women preferred to use "feminine" tactics involving helplessness, giving indirect information, or appealing to a sense of group solidarity. They chose statements such as "Help. Please sort faster. I'm really depending on you." Or, "Please sort faster. I think our group can be one of the best. Let's all try to sort very fast." Although men often used these "feminine" strategies, they were equally likely to use "masculine" strategies that were rejected by women. These included referring to their own expertise, exerting their authority as supervisor, or giving direct information. Statements included, "Please sort faster. I know it's possible to go faster because I've worked on this sort of thing before and you can really go fast." Or, "As your supervisor, I'd like to ask you to sort faster, please."

For women to use direct, authoritative power styles is seen as inappropriate by both women and men. Johnson points out that feminine strategies are often effective, at least in the short run. But they have several disadvantages. First, indirect and manipulative tactics perpetuate women's powerlessness. Such ploys exploit women's subordinate position, in the same way that slaves manipulated their masters, but such manipulation does not challenge the power hierarchy. Feminine styles of influence are designed to conceal women's true influence. As a result, they make women appear helpless and less powerful than they actually are. At the same time, they add to the impression that women are sneaky and devious. Finally, feminine strategies may contribute to women's own feelings of powerlessness and low esteem.

But Jessie Bernard suggests that in recent years, women are increasingly shunning "feminine" styles of power. In describing recent trends, she says:

> The wife was no longer dissembling. She was rejecting the idea of a misfit between the . . . theoretical pattern and the actual pattern. This . . . reflected wives' increasing reluctance to go along with the institutional conception of marriage which put them down and reduced them to manipulative operators. They no longer wanted to be devious, to simulate, to be patronized.[14]

To examine the extent to which boyfriends and girlfriends use different styles of influence, Susan Kaplan[15] invited fifty-nine of our couples to participate in a lab study of couple interaction. Each couple was observed while working together on a series of activities designed to assess different aspects of power. In one part of the study, the couple read brief case histories of hypothetical couples. Each involved some sort of conflict or disagreement. In one case, for instance, David wants to spend a quiet evening with Jane, but she feels they should go to a party given by her friends. For each case, the boyfriend and girlfriend read slightly different accounts of the incident. One version, for instance, would be favorable to Jane's position while the other was more positive to David's point of view. After reading each case, the couple was asked to discuss it and reach a joint decision about whose position in the story was more justified. These discussions were tape-recorded, and later scored by trained coders for twelve different power strategies that men and women might use. Some strategies were more "feminine," such as using an emotional appeal or asking for information. Others, such as taking control or giving an opinion were more stereotypically "masculine."

When Kaplan compared the types of strategies used by men and women, she found surprisingly few sex differences. On ten of the twelve measures, men and women did not differ. For instance, men were just as likely as women to use emotional appeals or to ask questions.

The two measures for which sex differences did emerge conformed to sex-role expectations. Men resorted to giving information significantly more often than women did. And women were more likely than men to disagree with an idea or contradict information given by the boyfriend. Kaplan suggests that males take a more assertive stance than females, whose power derives from resisting male assertion. Kaplan sees this as adhering to a traditional pattern in which the man "proposes" and the woman "opposes."

A HAPPY ENDING?

Fascinating Womanhood proposes that the acceptance of traditional sex roles and male leadership is essential to a happy male–female relationship. Feminists argue that traditional sex roles oppress women and make honest male–female relationships difficult. What impact do sex-role attitudes and the balance of power have on the success of a dating relationship? Our surprising answer is that they seem to have little impact on the happiness or survival of dating relationships.

We found no relationship between sex-role attitudes and satisfaction with the current relationship. Liberal and traditional couples rated themselves equally satisfied with their relationships and indicated that they felt equally close to their partners. Liberals and traditionals did not differ in reports of the likelihood of eventually marrying the current partner, in their love for their partner, or in the number of problems they anticipated in the relationship. Data from our follow-up indicated that liberal and traditional couples were equally likely to stay together or to break up.

To understand these findings, it is important to remember that dating partners usually had similar sex-role beliefs. Having shared attitudes and values may be much more crucial to the success of a relationship than the nature of the attitudes.[16] Mismatching on sex-role attitudes can create problems for couples, and such differences may be most important when a couple first begins to date. Since all the students in our study were already "going with" their partner, we do not have information about the impact of sex roles on first meetings or casual dating. Couples in our study had all survived the beginning of a relationship, perhaps because they agreed about sex roles or had managed to reconcile their differences.

Since students were nearly unanimous in their endorsement of an egalitarian ideal of power, we might expect the balance of power to affect couple satisfaction or survival. In fact, we found no differences at all between equal-power and male-dominant couples on measures of satisfaction, closeness, or breaking up during the two-year study. In contrast, however, both men and women reported less satisfaction in relationships where the woman had more say. It is apparently easier to follow a traditional pattern or to adhere to the new pattern of equality than to experience a female-dominant relationship.

Currently there is much controversy over proper behavior for men and women. Whether to adopt traditional standards, attempt to modify them, or reject old patterns outright are decisions we all must face. The results of our study suggest that traditional and egalitarian patterns are equally likely to lead to a satisfactory dating relationship or to a miserable one. Consensus between a man and a woman may be more important for couple happiness than the particular pattern a couple follows.

NOTES

1. Zick Rubin, *Liking and Loving: An Invitation to Social Psychology* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973).
2. Jessie Bernard, *The Future of Marriage* (New York: Bantam, 1972); and Margaret Mead, *Male and Female* (New York: Dell, 1968).
3. Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970).
4. Helen B. Andelin, *Fascinating Womanhood* (New York: Bantam, 1963).
5. Ibid., 134–35.
6. This research is part of a large study of dating relationships. To obtain a representative group of college dating couples, the researchers contacted a random sample of students at four colleges and universities in the Boston area. To be eligible for the study, students had to be "going with" a boyfriend or girlfriend, and both partners had to be willing to participate. A total of 231 couples met these criteria and took part in the research. Both partners independently responded to lengthy questionnaires concerning their background, attitudes, and current relationship in 1972. Follow-up questionnaires were administered one and two years later.

   The typical couple in our study consisted of a sophomore woman dating a junior man. When the study began, the couples had been dating for a median period of eight months. About half the participants' fathers had graduated from college, and about one-fourth held graduate degrees. About 44 percent of the students were Catholic, 26 percent were Protestant, and 25 percent were Jewish, reflecting the religious composition of the colleges in the Boston area. Virtually all participants (97 percent) were white.

   Those interested in further papers based on this research should see Letitia A. Peplau, "Impact of Fear of Success and Sex-Role Attitudes on Women's Competitive Achievement," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 34 (1976), 561–68; Charles T. Hill, Zick Rubin, and Letitia A. Peplau, "Breakups before Marriage: The End of 103 Affairs," *Journal of Social Issues*, 32:1 (1976), 147–68; and Letitia A. Peplau, Zick Rubin, and Charles T. Hill, "Sexual Intimacy in Dating Relationships," *Journal of Social Issues*, 33:2 (1977), 86–109.
7. Ronald E. Cromwell and David H. Olson, eds., *Power in Families* (New York: Wiley, 1975).
8. Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, "The Study of Family Power Structure: A Review—1960–1969," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 32 (1970), 539–52.
9. Peter M. Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (New York: Wiley, 1964); and John W. Thibaut and Harold H. Kelley, *The Social Psychology of Groups* (New York: Wiley, 1959).
10. Ellen Berscheid and Elaine Walster, "Physical Attractiveness," in Leonard Berkowitz, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 7 (New York: Academic Press, 1974).
11. Andelin, *Fascinating Womanhood*, 145–46.
12. Bernard, *The Future of Marriage*, 155.

13. Paula B. Johnson, "Women and Power: Toward a Theory of Effectiveness," *Journal of Social Issues,* 32:3 (1976), 99–110; and Paula B. Johnson and Jacqueline D. Goodchilds, "How Women Get Their Way," *Psychology Today,* 10:5 (October 1976), 69–70.
14. Bernard, *The Future of Marriage,* 152.
15. Susan L. Kaplan, "The Exercise of Power in Dating Couples" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1975).
16. Hill, Rubin, and Peplau, "Breakups before Marriage."

JANICE M. STEIL

Marital relationships and mental health: The psychic costs of inequality

The status of married women in relation to their husbands has been described as extending along a continuum from wife as property to wife as equal partner, with wife as complement and wife as junior partner as intermediary steps.[1] Many would assert that wives, historically, were situated on the property end of this continuum.[2] Consistent with this characterization, prior to the Civil War married women had many duties but few rights. They were not permitted to control their property, even when it was theirs by inheritance. A husband had the right to collect and use his wife's wages, to decide on the education and religion of their children, and to punish his wife if she displeased him. The wife's property status was based on the English common law which declared that

> the legal existence of the wife is merged in that of the husband so that, in law, the husband and wife are one person. . . . The husband's dominion over the person and property of the wife is fully recognized. She is utterly incompetent to contract in her own name. He is entitled to her society and her service; to her obedience and her property. . . . In consideration of his married rights the husband is bound to furnish the wife a home and suitable support.[3]

Today, both popular and social science literature lead us to believe that married women have moved to the other end of the continum, wife as equal partner. As early as 1960, the authors of a singularly influential study concluded that "the average American family has changed its authority pattern from one of patriarchal male dominance to one of egalitarian sharing."[4] In this well-known study, 731 urban and suburban wives and 178 farm wives living in the Detroit area were asked:

Who usually makes the final decision about . . .

1. what job the husband should take
2. what car to get

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3. whether or not to buy life insurance
4. where to go on a vacation
5. what house or apartment to take
6. whether or not the wife should go to work or quit work
7. what doctor to have when someone is sick
8. how much money the family can afford to spend per week on food

Scores were assigned on the basis of the wives' responses, which ranged from "husband always" to "wife always" makes the final decision, and these scores were then summed. The results are summarized in table 1. The scoring procedure was based on the assumption that all the decisions were equally important. Common sense, however, suggests that this is unlikely. A husband's job is likely to have a singular impact on the family's life (certainly in terms of geographic location, standard of living, and time available to spend with family members). Many of the other decisions, such as the food budget, where to go on vacation, and the kind of home, may well be determined by the husband's job. Keeping this differential importance in mind, we note that 90 percent of the respondents reported that the husbands always made the final decision regarding the husband's job, and 41 percent reported that the wives always made the final decision regarding food. Food is the area in which wives reportedly have the most decision-making power. The two areas that seem most equal in importance are what

TABLE 1 Allocation of power in decision-making areas (731 Detroit families)

	Decision							
Who Decides	Husband's job	Car	Insurance	Vacation	House	Wife's work	Doctor	Food
(5) Husband always	90%	56%	31%	12%	12%	26%	7%	10%
(4) Husband more than wife	4%	12%	11%	6%	6%	5%	3%	2%
(3) Husband and wife exactly the same	3%	25%	41%	68%	58%	18%	45%	32%
(2) Wife more than husband	0%	2%	4%	4%	10%	9%	11%	11%
(1) Wife always	1%	3%	10%	7%	13%	39%	31%	41%
No answer	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	3%	3%	3%
Total	100%	99%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%
Husband's mean power[a]	4.86	4.18	3.50	3.12	2.94	2.69	2.53	2.26

Source: Robert O. Blood and Donald M. Wolfe, *Husbands and Wives: The Dynamics of Married Living* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960), 21. Copyright © 1960 by The Free Press, a Corporation.

[a] The mean for each column is computed on the basis of the weights shown, e.g., "husband always" = 5.

job the husband should take and whether or not the wife should go to work or quit work. While 90 percent of the husbands were reported to have the final say regarding their own job, only 39 percent of the wives were reported to have the final say regarding whether they should or should not work. Looking at the responses from the other direction, we find that only 1 percent of the wives reportedly had the final say regarding their husband's job, but 26 percent of the husbands were reported to have the final say on whether their wives should work. Husbands were more than twice as likely to have the final say regarding their wives' working (26 percent) as they were regarding the food budget (10 percent). Not only do the decisions differ in terms of their relative importance, but it also seems that some decisions (such as the food budget) are relegated to the less powerful partner simply because the decisions are less important.[5] Giving equal weight to the less important and delegated decisions inflated the wives' scores and biased the findings. Yet, despite this bias, the overall mean scores still reflected husband dominance.

Other investigators have studied the power structure of American marriages by asking husbands and wives, "When there's a really important decision on which you two are likely to disagree, who usually wins out?" In the findings of one such study, 50 percent of middle-class housewives and 53 percent of their husbands reported that the husband had greater influence. By comparison, none of the middle-class housewives reported that they had more influence than their husbands. One half reported that the influence of each spouse was equal. White middle-class husbands were more likely to have "greater influence" than working-class husbands, but the tendency for greater influence declined for both groups when their wives were employed outside the home.[6] In another study, a sample of 336 Canadian households were asked, "Who is the real boss in your family?" Only wives' responses were reported. Of these, 76 percent said that the husband was the boss. Only 13 percent said that power was equally shared.[7] Despite the variability of the findings, the assertion of equality as the normative condition of marital relationships seems unwarranted. Neither the early studies nor those conducted more recently support the conclusion of equality.

THE DUAL-CAREER FAMILY

Recent investigations have focused on the dual-career family, defined as "one in which both heads of households pursue careers (as compared to jobs) and at the same time maintain a family life together."[8] The dual-career couple has been perceived as the most egalitarian marriage situation and the harbinger of future family patterns. Even among such couples, however, there is a consistent pattern of inequality in the home and at work. Only the husband's occupational characteristics, and particularly his occupational prestige, affect the probability that the family will move in response to job opportunities. Neither the wife's occupational prestige, nor her relative contribution to the family income, nor opportunities for employment in her field elsewhere in the country affect the relocation of dual-career couples.[9] Further, "when employment pressures require, the wife's career is more likely to be considered as secondary, her job is more likely to be part-time or (in academic settings) non-tenure track, and her pay and level are likely to be less than her husband's."[10] In the domestic sphere, household management and work are not evenly shared. Wives are more likely than their husbands to have to curtail career involvements in favor of family demands, and both partners seem to accept as inevitable that women have to bear the brunt of child care and domestic organization.[11] Further, as some investigators have noted, tension lines often develop. In one well-known study, the investigators observed that "the main tension lines for men were in the area of how much responsibility (as distinct from participation) to take in the home, and how much occupational achievement to *tolerate* [emphasis added] in their wives."[12] Despite the husbands' supportive orientation, both partners seem to endorse some level of male dominance. Thus, the authors report that "Mr. O encourages his wife to pursue her career . . . but the amount of income relative to his is a point of some tension between them. . . . With the X's the central issue is authority. . . . he did not wish actually to have her in authority over the job on which he himself was working."[13] Wives, it seems, collude in this process. They consider themselves fortunate in being able to combine a career with traditional responsibilities and thus report little dissatisfaction with having to assume a disproportionate share of the domestic tasks.[14] In addition, wives tend to deemphasize their work positions while they are in the home context. They may portray their careers as secondary and their successes as accidental, rather than assert the importance of their own competence.[15] Dual-career couples, then, are not egalitarian. As Bryson and Bryson concluded, "they tend to divide household responsibilities along sex-stereotypic lines and to place differential values on their careers. It also seems clear that the pressure for such differentiation falls disproportionately on the wife."[16]

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH HUSBAND DOMINANCE

Family size, social class, ethnicity, husband's income, and wife's employment status have consistently been associated with the extent of a husband's dominance. Blood and Wolfe found that black husbands had less power than white husbands.[17] Centers, Raven, and Rodriquez found Oriental husbands to have more influence than whites and found black husbands to have the least.[18] Scanzoni and Szinovacy suggested that black couples may be more egalitarian about sex roles than whites.[19] Working-class husbands have less power than middle-class husbands.[20] White middle-class housewives who do not work outside the home may well have less power in their marital relationships than any other group. The better educated and more successful the husband, the less power the wife is likely to have.[21] This finding seems to counter hypotheses that higher levels of education and social class are usually associated with more egalitarian ideologies. As Goode points out, however, "lower class men concede fewer rights ideologically than their women in fact obtain; and the more educated men are likely to concede more rights ideologically than they, in fact, grant."[22] It may well be a two-way street. Housewives are more likely to endorse traditional sex-role ideologies than are women who work for pay.[23] It has also been reported that, the higher a husband's income, the more likely his wife is to endorse the legitimacy of his power on the basis of traditional male authority.[24]

Employed wives are consistently shown to be less likely to endorse traditional ideologies, to have more say in decision making, and to enjoy a somewhat more egalitarian division of family roles than nonemployed wives.[25] Among employed wives, influence and task sharing tend to be greater for those who work full-time. Yet, even under optimal conditions, it has been noted that working wives do five times as much domestic work as their spouses—and usually more.[26] Further, studies that ask who has prime *responsibility* for domestic tasks show no difference between full-time and part-time women workers.[27] Number of years worked and continuity and pattern of employment may also be associated with an increase in the wife's influence but not with increased sharing of child care responsibilities.[28] Finally, two studies (Centers, Raven, and Rodriquez; Scanzoni and Szinovacy) note that the husband's influence is greatest in first marriages and is least when both partners have remarried.[29]

The marital influence of the wife, then, is inversely related to her husband's income, his occupational prestige, and the number of young children and directly related to the extent of her participation in the paid labor force. While various explanations for these findings have been and can be suggested, both ideological and economic factors seem particularly pertinent. Ideologically, many of the elements of the early English common law persist in today's value structure. The "ideal" husband still heads the household and assumes the financial responsibility of providing for his family. In return, it seems, he is still entitled to his wife's "society and service." Thus, the "ideal" wife still assumes primary responsibility for care of the home and children. She is expected to put the needs and interests of her husband and his occupation as well as the needs and interests of the children above her own. Consistent with this ideology, the likelihood of the wife's employment decreases as family size, husband's income, and husband's occupational level increase. The more the husband is able to provide economically for the family, the more likely it is that the wife will be at home. Yet, nonparticipation in the paid labor force is likely to increase the wife's economic and emotional dependence, as well as decrease her influence in the family. As the wife withdraws from the labor force, the husband becomes the sole economic provider and primary source of family prestige. Thus, he is perceived as entitled to increasing authority over and deference from his family. Whether or not a wife works for pay, then, may be the single most important factor in determining her power status relative to her husband.

Yet, the empirical literature clearly shows that even employed professional wives are unlikely to achieve equality. The economic realities of a society in which women earn significantly less than men make it unlikely that the wife will contribute equally to the family finances. In fact, the average employed wife earns considerably less than her husband. Her reduced earning power is exacerbated by society's gender-specific ascriptions of family responsibilities. Thus, as one investigator noted, "even when the wife is well educated and working, and the husband is not successful, she tends to do more around the house than he does, and were our measurement of role sharing strict enough to include only absolutely equal patterns, we would lose all our cases."[30] Thus these authors suggest that relationships in which the husband performs 50 percent of the household tasks and the wife contributes 50 percent of the family income are so rare they defy study.

THE COSTS OF INEQUALITY

Bernard was one of the first to note that there is now a considerable body of research showing that there are really two marriages in every marital union, "his" and "hers." These two marriages do not always coincide, and, according to Bernard, "his" marriage is better than "hers."[31] Statistically speaking, marriage is good for men. Married men are less likely to show serious symptoms of psychological distress and less likely to suffer mental health impairments than are men who were never married. Married men live longer on the average than never married men, experience greater career success, and are less likely to be involved in crime. The fact seems unassailable that, for men, the married fare far better than the unmarried. Why this is so is less clear. Some have asked whether it is marriage that is so beneficial to men, or whether the more vulnerable men never marry. In fact, we cannot know unequivocally which is cause and which is effect. Yet most attempts to address the question suggest that marriage is indeed beneficial to men.[32]

On the other hand, marriage is not as good for women as it is for men. Although married women generally fare better than unmarried women, they "suffer far greater mental health hazards and present a far worse clinical picture" than married men.[33] An analysis of seventeen studies examining the relationship between sex, marital status, and mental illness showed that, even with wide variations in definition, married women consistently showed higher rates of mental disorder than married men.[34] This is not the case for single women compared to single men. For every category of the unmarried (i.e., never married, divorced, and widowed), the majority of studies show higher rates of mental illness for males than for females. It is only among the married, then, that women have higher rates of mental illness than men do.

The greater incidence of mental illness in married women does not seem to be a consequence of greater biological vulnerability or of differential patterns of help-seeking behavior.[35] Some have suggested that it may be due to characteristics of the female role, particularly the married woman's role as housewife.[36] Bernard reviewed the incidence of poor mental and emotional health among housewives (all of whom were presumed to be married) and working women (three-fifths of whom were married). In terms of eleven of twelve symptoms of psychological distress, the working women were found to be overwhelmingly better off than the housewives. This is really rather surprising, given the disproportionate demands that are placed on the employed/married woman. As we have seen, she continues to carry the responsibilities of housewife and mother and simply adds the responsibilities of paid work to them. Why then should the housewife fare more poorly? Bernard concluded that the major reason was the status denigration that marriage brings to housewives.[37] Other authors, particularly Gove, suggest that housework not only is accorded low status but also is invisible and unstructured. Further, the absence of paid employment deprives housewives of alternative sources of gratification when the housewife role is unsatisfying.[38] These authors suggest that, if marriage fails to bring satisfaction, the employed woman can turn to an alternative source of satisfaction, her job, whereas the housewife cannot.

Following publication of Bernard's book, two studies explicitly examined the relationship between roles and mental illness among the married.[39] In the first, Radloff assessed the prevalence of depressive symptoms among employed married men and both employed and unemployed married women. In the second, Gove and Geerken asked employed husbands, employed wives, and unemployed housewives a series of questions assessing the extent to which they felt subjected to incessant demands, desired to be alone, and often felt lonely. In the findings of both studies, unemployed housewives consistently fared the worst, employed husbands fared the best, and employed wives scored somewhere in between. Unemployed housewives were most likely to report that they felt confronted by incessant demands, desired to be alone more frequently, and felt lonely more frequently. Housewives also reported the highest prevalence of fourteen general psychiatric symptoms and experienced the highest incidence of depresssion. As Radloff points out, the dual-role hypothesis that working women can turn to other sources of gratification more easily than housewives can, explains the poor position of housewives compared to employed wives but not the difference between employed wives and employed husbands.[40] Since employed wives continue to assume more responsibility for child care and housework than their husbands do, it has been suggested that this burden of double duty may cause the difference in mental states between employed husbands and employed wives. Consistent with the literature, Radloff's study showed that married female workers did in fact spend significantly more time on housework than the married men. Yet this did not seem to explain the difference in depression. Thus, the role of housewife seems to explain only part of the greater incidence of mental symptoms in married women. Further, as Radloff reports, "neither working nor happiness with jobs and/or marriage makes married women as healthy as comparable married men."[41]

Because the incidence of mental illness is lower for married women than for unmarried women, it cannot be said that marriage per se is detrimental to women's health. Yet married women clearly do not fare as well as married men, and among married women unemployed housewives do not fare as well as the employed. The pattern, we suggest, mirrors the societal and marital pattern of inequality. It is consistent with the findings reviewed earlier which show that husbands typically have more influence than wives in marital relationships, and wives who are employed typically have more influence and status than those who are not. From this perspective, women's responses to Gove and Geerken's measure of incessant demands may reflect feelings of powerlessness, just as the desire to be alone may reflect a wish to escape a situation that feels both controlling and uncontrollable. It may be that poor emotional well-being and mental health are associated less with marriage per se than they are with a relationship of relative inequality of status and power between the partners. As yet, this hypothesis remains untested. Some studies, however, have shown that those in relatively more egalitarian marriages report greater satisfaction on the part of the wives, more instances of behavior that is conducive to building self-esteeem and esteem from others, and more adaptive responses to simulated crises.[42]

FROM EQUITY TO EQUALITY

Equity, equality, and need have been identified as distinct principles by which the conditions and goods that affect individual well-being are distributed.[43] Each principle represents a distinct value system and has differential implications for the course of human interaction. The equity principle prescribes that people's outcomes should be determined by their inputs, that is, the extent to which they make valued contributions. According to some, equity-based distributions tend to undermine mutual respect and self-respect by signifying that the different participants in a relationship do not have the same value. This is because equity is associated with the goal of economic productivity, and under an equity system people come to be regarded primarily in terms of their economic utility. The principle of equality, by contrast, prescribes that conditions and goods should be equally shared. Equality is associated with the goal of fostering and maintaining enjoyable relationships and, unlike equity, does not evoke the deleterious emotions that undermine them.[44]

Contemporary marriage relationships seem to be based primarily on principles of equity. This orientation reflects the institutions's historical economic roots and a societal ideology that values economic worth. Why else would women who relinquish positions of paid employment to stay home and nurture their children suffer a decline in influence? Because of this differential valuing, gender roles, which ascribe particular spheres of responsibility on the basis of sex, are not separate-but-equal. Rather they are separate and unequal.

We began this article with a description of a hypothetical status continuum extending from wife as property to wife as equal partner. Equality is characterized on this continuum by equal rights and equal duties for the partners in both the economic and the domestic spheres. Yet, this cannot be achieved in a system that ascribes differential responsibilities and entitlements on the basis of sex. Consequently, role specialization, as currently prescribed, must be replaced by role interchangeability and free choice. But, how is this to be achieved in a society that socializes women and men differently?

Family structures both reflect and perpetuate societal norms and values. If equality is to be achieved change must take place not only within marital relationships but also within the society as a whole. Yet change will not occur until stereotypic gender roles are perceived as unjust. Women will not see their position as unjust, however, until specific conditions have been established: women must be aware that other possibilities exist; they must want such possibilities for themselves; and, most important, they must believe they are entitled to these possibilities.[45] Those women who still support husband dominance do so because they believe in the appropriateness and importance of both the male role as breadwinner and the female role as nurturer (both to her husband and to her children.)[46] Clearly, this belief has important consequences for women's perceptions of their possibilities, their responsibilities, their wants, and their entitlements.[47]

For women to achieve equality, they must perceive it as something they are *entitled* to and be willing to assume the concordant responsibilities. This involves assuming equal responsibility in the economic sphere and accepting only equal responsibility in the familial sphere. The psychological and practical difficulties of such a reorientation are indeed great, and the single most important enabling factor may be husband support.[48] Yet, just as women disproportionately bear the costs of inequality (as our review of the studies suggests), so they will have to assume the initiative disproportionately in eliminating it. While the move toward equality may be facilitated by highlighting the benefits that will accrue to men as well as women, males overall "are not about to upset the status quo that provides them with such a favorable position."[49] The reorientation is likely to lead to an increase in the number of women who remain unmarried. In the short term, it will produce increased stress among the married, and, as long as society provides so little support to families with employed mothers, the reach for equality will exacerbate current trends toward smaller families and voluntary childlessness. As equality is achieved, however, there should be obvious improvements for all.

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Motherhood: Contemporary conflict for women

The power of ideology is demonstrated forcefully in the contemporary concept of motherhood. We all know about motherhood or, at least, think we know. We hold a set of assumptions and beliefs that is founded on the premise that the mother–child unit is basic, universal, and psychologically most suited for both the healthy development of the child and the fulfillment of the mother. "The experts have no doubts; they are unanimous in their statement that only the mother, and no one else, should take care of her child. No other question is answered so definitely and plainly. The mother is the person to look after her child."[1] Since raising children is useful work, necessary for the continuation of society, satisfying to human generative impulses, and highly valued in the lives of women who mother, it is easy for us to believe them and accept the motherhood mystique.

Yet mothering within this narrow definition conflicts with other important aspects of women's lives—productive work, companionate marriage, economic independence. Mothering is done at home, outside the world of achievement, power, and money. It consequently pulls women who mother away from the public world back into the private world, for at least part of their adult lives.

It is this aspect of motherhood, its limiting effect on women's public participation at a time when women have won access to the public world, that must inform the next stages of feminist activity for social change. It is not enough for women to be able to do men's work as well as women's, it is necessary to reconsider the value of mothering and reorder public priorities so that caring for children counts and adds to the lives of women and men. Until children are valued as members of society and child care is considered important work to be done by both men and women, the special burdens and benefits of motherhood will keep women in second place.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Mothering has not always been the same. Recent work by social historians indicates that our modern notion of motherhood has its roots in the ninethenth century.

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> The most important function of the morally superior nineteenth-century woman was bearing and raising children. In the Victorian period motherhood came to have the emotional and semisacred connotations that tempt one to write it with a capital "M." The mother's task was to care for her children physically, preserve their moral innocence, protect them from evil influences, and inspire them to pursue the highest spiritual values. If woman failed in this duty, she jeopardized the whole progress of civilization, an awesome responsibility indeed. . . . This glorification of motherhood and exaggeration of its responsibilities was as new an element in Anglo-American culture as the opinion that females were particularly virtuous. Indeed, the two ideas evolved together and reinforced one another in eighteenth and nineteenth century thought.[2]

Prior to this glorification of motherhood by the nineteenth-century middle class, the bearing and rearing of children was integrated into the other work women did and was not their most important work. In a subsistence farm economy, survival required women as well as men to place productive work before reproductive concerns. Women and men worked side by side, in and around the home. Women were responsible for food and clothing production for the family, which involved many complicated skills, as well as cooking, laundering, cleaning, and child care.[3] Infants were tended when possible, and were sometimes played with, but were never the center of their mothers' attention. Their care was largely the task of older siblings. Those children who survived infancy quickly took their places in the social and economic life of the family.[4]

Industrialization simultaneously disrupted the unity of home and workshop, decreased patriarchal power, and devalued women's work within the family. Life in industrial society is characterized by distinct separations: work from play, production from reproduction, adulthood from childhood. Adults work, children play. Work takes place in the office or factory, relaxation in the home. Things done outside the home are for money, inside the home they are for love. Within this new set of values, which emerged during the nineteenth century, women were assigned to the home as nonproducing housewives. In this context, motherwork became the focus of their attention. As work was transformed into wage labor in factory or office, the family took on new meaning. It became a refuge, the place to which dad and kids would come to recover from the pressure and pain of alienated work and school.[5] The burden of providing the comforts of home was assigned to women.

The combination of homemaking and child care was a full-time job, but it carried none of the economic benefits that employment outside the home provided. Although these reproductive tasks were more physically demanding in days gone by, they were not severed from the productive work of the family or imbued with heavy psychological significance. In contrast to the economic value of women's work in the past, today a woman's devotion to "women's work" makes her dependent on the people she tends. It results in an economic dependence on her husband, a man chosen for love, and a psychological dependence on her children as products of her mothering.

Other historic changes have also made more choices possible for women. Prior to the nineteenth century, abstinence was the only effective method of controlling fertility.[6] Technological improvements and political struggles have made contraception relatively safe, effective, and available in the twentieth century. With the repeal of restrictive birth control legislation in the 1960s, heterosexual intimacy is no longer inseparable from maternity. Although worldwide most babies are still unplanned,[7] in our country the birth rate has been decreasing steadily since 1880;[8] in the last two decades alone, the fertility rate of American women has fallen more than 50 percent.[9] Women have made a dramatic choice to have fewer children, to end their childbearing earlier, or to start their families later.

This steady decrease in the births per woman reflects more than the availability of contraception. It also reflects a perception on the part of more women that life has exciting and rewarding experiences to offier in addition to childbearing, and that these are within their reach. "Decreased fertility rates are a consequence of increased educational and occupational aspirations and pressures by women. To regulate her reproductive life a woman must also come to believe that it is morally right to control her own body and she must acquire knowledge regarding how best and most safely to do so."[10]

These increased educational and occupational opportunities are also consequences of economic and political changes. Although sex differences persist in education, today girls, like boys, are educated to compete to get ahead, to believe in and strive for individual success—first in school and then in a competitive labor market—and to value persistent independence. Coeducation, contraception, and the need for wage laborers have promoted the integration of women into the economic system; feminism has promoted the integration of women into the political system. At the same time, women are still trained to be the foundation of the family as wives and mothers. The nineteenth-century notion that "woman's place is in the home" lingers on as "woman's *essential* place is in the home."

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONFLICT AND MATERIAL COSTS

There are two sets of expectations for women: those made possible by industrialization—individuality, successful accomplishment, equality; and those born of the patriarchal tradition—the public domain belongs to men, wives and their services belong to their husbands, and family life is the responsibility of women. Although they conflict, the conflict is not always acute. Most girls learn to compartmentalize, to keep separate the feelings associated with achievement from those associated with femininity, and to handle them as mutually exclusive.[11] Separation is one strategy for coping with essentially contradictory expectations.[12] Indeed, the very structure of modern life makes this distinction appear "natural." Girls succeed in school; then, at home, as daughters and sisters, they assist in feminine pursuits.

Daughters are encouraged to prepare for work, but they are also expected to become mothers later. Through school, during the early years on a job, or in a childless marriage, middle-class women may notice contradictions, feel anger at sex discrimination at work or unequal responsibility for housework at home, or feel guilt about their shortcomings; but to a large extent they can manage to fulfill both sets of expectations.

The selection of a career, however, expresses clearly the consequences of this contradiction. Almost all college women expect to work at some time in their lives, almost all desire marriage and children, and almost all stress the centrality of family life to their future plans. The way they accomplish this is by remaining flexible in their career choices. For men, career is the central choice; by contrast, Shirley Angrist and Elizabeth Almquist, in a study of college women, found that

> choices are not so concrete, not so specific, and far from wide-ranging. The extreme changeability of occupational choices, the lack of decisiveness in their plans, the resort to a short list of predominantly "women's" fields, the tendency to postpone a definite choice and to vacillate—all these tell us that while [women] students perceive pressure to make decisions about their post-college lives, the particular occupation chosen is only one and perhaps not even the central component of their thinking about the future.[13]

In interviews with thirty middle-class suburban women who had at least one preschool child, I found that those who remembered having career aspirations as children were those who were employed.[14] Their particular fields of employment, however, were not necessarily related to their early aspirations or related to their academic training. Most of them wanted to work, but, for most, family responsibilities came first, so work had been adjusted. Some had enjoyed working, had stopped to raise their children, and were considering career changes when they returned to the ranks of the employed in the future. Others had given up careers (such as teaching) for jobs (such as waitressing) while their children were small. Still others had continued their careers while tending their children with the help of their husbands, paid mother-substitutes, or day-care centers. Yet in every case there were signs of job flexibility on the part of the employed mothers. They had rearranged hours, or changed jobs, or changed pace to encompass the demands of children as well as work. Faced with the two sets of expectations at the same time, they had readjusted their work.

The conflict between individual achievement and feminine responsibility, therefore, is not just internal. It helps to determine women's life activities. It pushes women to limit the careers they consider possible, to give up what they have accomplished for mother-work, or to spread themselves very thin. Motherhood, as we know it, has substantial material costs for women.

Infant care is a twenty-four-hour-a-day job. Although no particular part of it is especially difficult, child-centered care is constantly demanding. The feeding, bathing, and laundry routine involves a lot of physical labor. Beyond the child's infancy or with additional children, the job becomes much more difficult. For women who have been working, as most women have before their first child is born,[15] the changes from a work schedule to being in demand constantly, from adult to infant company, from feeling competent to feeling like a novice require a great deal of adjustment. Although many mothers try, few accomplish this transition without suffering from tension, depression, or emotional trauma. Postpartum depression is one of the first signs of difficulty. The excitement and rewards of the new mothering role partially offset the disruption. Motherhood, a very special aspect of being a woman, opens up the joy of intimate contact with a growing, developing infant, the sense of importance that nurturing holds for most women, and the personal growth that comes from facing and mastering a new developmental stage. Modern mothering ideals, however, require selflessness from women who have been socialized by their experiences at school and at work to be selves. This conflict of values is why the early mothering years are characterized by pain and conflict.

The difficulties are heightened by the fact that, while many lofty phrases are penned in tribute to mother-work, it is accorded very low prestige. Our society values money, power, and achievement, none of which are associated with child care.[16] Women who are used to achieving in their own right and earning their own paychecks become defined as someone's wife and someone's mother. They also become financially dependent on the income of their husbands. Later, when the children leave home, there are new costs. Mothers still have half or more of their lives ahead of them, but their "priority" role, raising the children, is over.[17] Their years of full-time work in the home leave them unprepared for life after active mothering; their work skills are rusty, their training is dated, and they are unsure of themselves. Alternatively, mothers who insist on continuing their employment face the difficulties peculiar to this: double demands, two jobs at once, and guilt.

Mother-work, therefore, extracts a great cost from women. Although it is filled with responsibility, it brings none of the material rewards of employment. It is demeaned and trivialized in the mass media, which use it to sell a multitude of housekeeping products. It is not integrated with productive work; rather, it conflicts with work or career, thereby limiting a woman's independence, achievement, earnings, and status.[18]

THE MOTHERHOOD MYSTIQUE

Motherhood, as we know it, is only one possible child-rearing arrangement. It has the aura, however, of being "natural" and unchanging. Because of this aura, our contemporary definition has been referred to as the *motherhood mystique*.[19] It has four aspects: (1) ultimate fulfillment *as a woman* is achieved by becoming a mother; (2) the body of work assigned to mothers—caring for child, home, and husband—fits together in a noncontradictory manner; (3) to be a good mother, a woman must like being a mother and all the work that goes with it; (4) a woman's intense, exclusive devotion to mothering is good for her children.

Becoming a mother introduces a woman into a new league, the league of "real" women. Once a pregnancy begins to show, women who may never have spoken to the expectant mother before become friendly and offer helpful advice. Giving birth proves womanhood, as combat proves manhood. Successful combat, however, requires physical training and intellectual rigor; successful birth requires only conception and the unfolding of the physiological processes. Endeavors that a woman has been devoted to for years tend to be overlooked in the general excitement created by pregnancy and birth. Hospitals and families act as though all else the woman has done or been is now unimportant; being a mother will absorb her, interest her, and define her.[20] This is very different from the view of fathers, who are expected to be interested in and delighted by their children but whose other interests and employment are expected to continue. This aspect of the motherhood mystique is a denial of a woman as a multifaceted person.

In spite of strong social approval for childbearing, women find that giving birth does not provide ultimate fulfillment. Fulfillment does not come from the experience of a biological event but from development of and dedication to values, interests, and competencies over time. Nor does giving birth ensure a perfect relationship with a new and perfect being. Relationships are never perfect and always require time and energy. The gap between many a new mother's expectations of fulfillment and the reality of exhaustion and distraction is often shocking. While almost everybody gets excited about pregnancy and birth, no one gets excited about colicky babies and dirty diapers. After being the center of attention in the hospital and during her homecoming, a new mother soon finds herself very much alone at home. The birth of a first child is, therefore, "an event causing the greatest discontinuity of personality in American middle-class women," especially if the birth is not followed by full-time involvement outside the home.[21]

The second aspect of the motherhood mystique is the assumption that care of child, home, and husband consists of complimentary roles. For middle-class women this is not true; conflict exists between the roles of mother, housewife, and wife. Although couples usually expect the birth of their baby to enhance their relationship, in fact the first baby's birth has been shown to cut conversation time between parents almost in half and to shift the topics of conversation from the parents' relationship, their inner feelings, or sex, to the child. The two become parents first and marriage partners second.[22] The child becomes the focus of the wife's attention, often causing the husband to resent being ousted from first place in her consideration. There is conflict between the needs and demands of children for attention, their noise, and their activity and a husband's need for order, peace, and food at the end of a workday. In addition, the modern companionate marriage assumes a strong common bond between husband and wife in the preparental stage. The traditional wife-mother-housewife and husband-father-breadwinner division of labor that often follows the birth of the first child dramatically changes the former quasi-egalitarian relationship between the parents. With the child come new problems, worries, and inner conflicts, and because their roles are now so different the husband and wife are often pulled apart. Some of the role changes bring tension. The wife may envy the husband's freedom. The husband may feel additional financial pressure and envy his wife's self-regulated schedule.

In a study of infant care in which more than 700 mothers of infants were interviewed, John and Elizabeth Newson found significant dissatisfaction with the mother role among middle-class women in Nottingham, England.[23] These women expected to be social assets to their husbands. Babies and young children, however, interfered with this goal by disturbing the cleanliness of their homes, their intellectual pursuits, and their previously well-ordered lives.

Motherhood, therefore, is a complicated set of roles that results in ambivalent feelings on the part of women. There are the love, intimacy, and caring that make it personal, intense, and special, but there are also the very real changes in women's bodies, time, work, and marriage relationships. This leads to conflicting feelings in most mothers: feelings of intense need and suffocation; of sublime selflessness and supreme selfishness.[24]

Since the third aspect of the motherhood mystique is that to be a good mother a woman must like being a mother, ambivalent feelings lead to guilt and worry about mothering adequacy. Angela McBride writes of "the anger-depression-guilt-go-round" that is a "normal-crazy" part of the motherhood experience.[25] As people, women have different personalities, talents, and temperaments, but as mothers they are expected to be continually patient, even-tempered, and consistent. When they fail to meet these impossible expectations, they fear that they are bad mothers, that they are failing their children. In the past, when child care was not expected to be the focus of a mother's life, there was less self-consciousness and guilt associated with the role. Now women turn to experts—pediatricians, psychologists, social workers—to tell them what to do and try to measure their behavior in terms of the pundits' advice.[26] The whole experience becomes more tormented and less satisfying; it loses the spontaneity and genuine warmth of unmediated intimate relations.

This self-conscious, guilt-ridden striving might be justified if the fourth aspect of the mystique, that exclusive, full-time mothering is best for child development, were true—but that is not at all clear. Having one person on twenty-four-hour duty is not optimal for meeting the developmental needs of a child. The most even-tempered mother will at times be tired, self-absorbed, occupied with other things, or under the weather. The child is then subject to adult anger, annoyance, or inattention when she or he may have real needs. On the other hand, when mom feels chipper she may shower attention on the child at a time when the child needs most to be left alone. Assigning child care to a single adult leaves both the adult and the child subject to the needs, feelings, and demands of the other without relief. Children are consequently overmothered and undermothered by turns. When mothers feel guilty or worried they pour attention on their children; when they feel angry or preoccupied, there is no one else to whom the child can turn. In each situation the children are bound into the personality dynamics of the mothers. "The result of the exclusiveness of the mother–child relationship is that no one can prevent this relationship from becoming too narrow. It makes personality absorption practically unavoidable."[27]

This is the aspect of the mother–child relationship that has led to the concept of "momism." Momism has become a catchword for blaming a mother for living out her needs through her children, for being overbearing and overabsorbing.[28] Blaming mom, however, is blaming the victim. Because a mother gives up so much to be a mother, because she is educated and achievement-oriented, because there is so little family or community support for the contemporary mother, the child has come to mean too much to her. The child cannot grow freely but must succeed for the mother, to show that she has done a good job and that her sacrifices have been worth it. Since a woman often puts aside any personal ambitions for motherhood, the child may be expected to succeed in her stead, to act out her ambitions for her. Or the child may become a substitute for them, a product she can be proud of as well as a child. The workplace values of achievement and success are extended to the kin relationship.

Women sacrifice to do what is "best" for their children, but it simply is not best.

> The way we institutionalize motherhood in our society—assigning sole responsibility for child care to the mother, cutting her off from the easy help of others in an isolated household, requiring round-the-clock tender, loving care, and making such care her exclusive activity—is not only unique, but not even a good way for either women or—if we accept as a criterion the amount of maternal warmth shown—for children. It may, in fact, be the worst. It is as though we had selected the worst features of all the ways motherhood is structured around the world and combined them to produce our current design.[29]

A longitudinal study of New York City and suburban families with moms at home and dads at work clearly demonstrates this point. Sylvia Brody and Sidney Axelrod found that very few women "mothered adequately." Adequate mothering required mothers who were emotionally stable *and* educated *and* not distressed by their economic conditions *and* who had satisfactory marriages. As we know, most mothers do not have all these advantages. The majority of the mothers they studied did not, and these mothers almost had "to ignore signs of distress in the child, to make too hasty judgments of the child's behavior, or to rationalize that it is the child's unalterable nature to act as he does.[30]

THE CONTEMPORARY PROBLEM

In spite of the contradictions, most women want to be mothers and most mothers want at least two children.[31] The contemporary problem is how to fit motherhood into their lives without relinquishing their other activities, or narrowing their ambitions. Women have many reasons for wanting children—liking for children, desiring to experience pregnancy and childbirth, demonstrating being adult, establishing a family like their family of origin, resolving an uncertain identity, conforming to social expectations. Some of these have to do with pronatalist social pressure—pressure from family, church, and media that pushes women to have children.[32] Liberation for women means freedom from the single, socially assigned role of mother, freedom to choose whether to be mothers. But self-fulfillment for most contemporary women includes a sexual relationship and motherhood as well as ego-creative work that expresses individuality.[33] Motherhood is a very limited choice, if a woman must accept the entire motherhood mystique, which denies the importance of nonmaternal pursuits. The contemporary question is: How can motherhood be organized so that it will be better for both women and children than is currently the case?

There is a related problem for men. In this world of largely contractual work relationships, the responsibility for nurturing one's offspring—some of the time—has its special rewards. Being in intimate physical and emotional contact with a child develops a father's loving and caring feelings, establishes a closeness between himself and his child, and keeps him in tune with the experiences of his wife. Our current assignment of child-rearing responsibilities denies this to men. In addition, changing the "exclusive mother" ideal can relieve some of the pressure on a couple to switch from shared roles before the birth of a child to the sex-stereotyped roles discussed earlier when the first child is born.

Given the biological demands of pregnancy and lactation, however, as well as the historical connection between mothers and children, it would be a mistake to take the focus off mothers while examining the problems of child rearing. How can a mother fit it into her life? A good place to begin the examination is with the last generation of mothers. Pauline Bart, in a pioneering study of depression in middle-aged women, found that it was "women who play the traditional feminine role—who are housewives, are not aggressive, are centered on their children, who in short, have 'bought' the cultural proscriptions—who are most prone to depression when their children leave."[34] Utilizing anthropological and epidemiological data, as well as interviews with twenty hospitalized middle-aged women, she found that overinvolved and overprotective relationships with their children could be pathological for mothers in middle age.

"Today's midlife women had lived by the old rules—rules that promised [a woman] kudos, congratulations, and fulfillment of self for giving up her own life to meet her responsibilities to others."[35] Lillian Rubin conducted a series of interviews with normal middle-aged women who had devoted themselves to the responsibilities of child rearing and now were in the postparental stage of their lives. Rubin found that the women were unprepared for life after children; neither they nor their husbands had looked ahead. The problems of these midlife women suggest a way of considering the issue of motherhood for young women. Active mothering is a stage in life, not an ultimate fulfillment or a lifelong job. Women's life expectancies are long, family size is typically small, and children grow up and go off. Young women must prepare for satisfying employment and not consider child rearing their life work. As one of Rubin's interviewees said, "motherhood self-destructs in twenty years."[36]

Several life plans are possible: one can have a family, raise it, and then plan to find a new kind of work; one can establish a career and then take time out for raising a family; or one can plan to do both simultaneously. Each of the life patterns has its problems; only choosing to be childless avoids this conflict.

The women Lillian Rubin spoke with had many fears and doubts to overcome in facing going to work. They also had to face resistance on the part of their husbands and the lack of interesting, challenging, decently paying jobs for inexperienced middle-aged women.[37] Women may reduce these problems somewhat by planning to work in the future, but staying home full-time for twenty or so years to tend to the needs of others is not good preparation for successful accomplishment in much of the public world.[38] It tracks women into service jobs, extensions of mothering, when they are ready for employment. This path of "family first, then career" has been a difficult one for women to follow, in part because they have not planned ahead. I suspect it will become even more difficult when women do plan ahead, because it pushes them to get childbearing out of the way early, and that decision has been shown to have particularly limiting effects on women's educational and occupational achievement.[39] In practice, first births have rarely been planned; I found that when they were planned it was usually in conjunction with an active career, never with a future one.[40]

Establishing a career and then taking time out works well for some women. It is this option that attracts many women to teaching or nursing, because these careers offer some flexibility for fitting in families. For many women, however, it is frustrating and boring to be home once they have established a career, and many careers (particularly those that are less traditionally "female") do not allow for a time-off period long enough to raise a child or two to school age. This pattern of career choice results in severely limiting the areas of women's public participation to a few sex-stereotyped jobs.

In 1980, 42 percent of all married women with at least one child under six years old were employed; 50 percent of all divorced, widowed, and never-married mothers of children under six were employed.[41] This reflects the reality that many mothers cannot or do not choose to stay home with their young children. For a variety of reasons almost half the mothers with preschoolers are employed; they are living out the "both" option.

When midlife comes and children go, women who have jobs or careers are better prepared for the postparental stage of life. But, during the years of simultaneously working and caring for a young family, the combination is physically demanding and involves constant compromise. As one articulate survivor has put it, "the fact remains that if a mother drops out of her career or job slot for a few years—as I did—her professional development will suffer. Yet, if she continues to work, she will also suffer—from chronic exhaustion at the very least—and this will make her children and her husband suffer as well."[42] In the past, the extended family—primarily grandmothers and aunts—would share child care, providing variety for children and relief, as well as sociability, for mothers. When female relatives are nearby, women often have help from them, but many families today are geographically isolated from relatives.

Families in which fathers are present have the option of sharing responsibilities between husband and wife. There is considerable evidence that when the wife is employed the husband does more house and child care than when the wife is home, although not a full half of it. Kathryn Walker found that husbands of working wives assisted one to three hours per day, while the wives spent four to eight hours on housework.[43] I found that husbands of working mothers took more responsibility for child care than did those of nonemployed mothers; most helped, and a few shared responsibility. Husbands of nonemployed mothers often helped when they were around, but they did not regulate their other commitments in order to help. None of them shared responsibility for home and child care, and some did none of it.[44] Robert Blood and Donald Wolfe found that "working wife families depart appreciably from traditional roles." They reported more household participation by husbands, more sharing of traditionally feminine tasks such as grocery shopping, straightening the living room, and doing the dinner dishes.[45] In almost all cases, however, the working mother is responsible for making the arrangements and assigning the tasks, although the father may help carry them out. She is the one who has "the executive decision-making responsibilities over child and family matters."[46] And, of course, many working mothers have no husbands.

Although many fathers help, child care and housework are done for the most part by women, mothers, or mother-substitutes. Women choosing or being forced by circumstances to do "both" are faced with serious constraints. Some few have the option of hiring a full-time housekeeper/mother-substitute to keep household and child well tended, while they vigorously pursue their careers. This is the female equivalent of having a wife.[47] Many others give their careers less than they would if they did not have a family to care for as well.[48] Not all career commitments are consistent with active mothering or fathering. An active parent must be willing to give up some of the other pursuits that engage adults, at least for a while. There is no reason, however, why only mothers should be active parents.

A QUESTION OF VALUES

The role of mother brings with it benefits as well as limitations. Children affect parents in ways that lead to personal growth, enable reworking of childhood conflicts, build flexibility and empathy, and provide intimate, loving human connections. "Little People are more curious than cautious," they expand their caretakers' worlds by their activity levels, their imaginations, and their inherently appealing natures.[49] Although motherhood is not enough to fill an entire life, for most mothers it is one of the most meaningful experiences in their lives.

The option that most reduces the costs for young women who want to be mothers is to prepare to combine work and family. Accepting the continuing importance of employment in their lifetimes enables women to take their career choices and training seriously, to select mates who are more inclined to share the responsibility of family care, and to resist the pressures of the motherhood mystique. This option provides the most opportunity for women, men, and children. It is also the option most associated with better health for women. Women with several key roles, such as employment, marriage, and parenthood, are more likely to be healthy than women with few roles. Mutliple roles provide more privileges, more resources, and more avenues for self-esteem and social involvement. Women without multiple key roles are more subject to boredom, social isolation, and stress. Employment is the single most important factor. Employed women have the best health; full-time homemakers have the worst health.[50]

For women, relinquishing sole responsibility for childrearing and family care is necessary if they are to become equal participants in the productive activities of the public world. By defining ultimate fulfillment for women through maternity, the motherhood mystique limits all women, not just mothers, to secondary status outside the home; maternal responsibilities, or potential ones, are always expected to come first. When women reject the mystique, and take their productive lives as seriously as their family responsibilities, they help create a different view of women.

To do this, however, requires a change for men as well. Fathers must be more active as caretaking parents. Sharing responsibility for both family life and financial support enables men to be closer to their children, less at the mercy of their employers, and better friends with their wives. In fact, many critics of the masculine sex-role stereotype consider that "being with children and joining in the immediacy of their emotional life may be a route toward reclaiming the sponaneous emotional awareness that . . . masculine training drove into hiding so long ago."[51]

Children, perhaps, will gain the most if they are released from their intense one-to-one relationships with their mothers. Having two, or more, involved caretakers broadens a child's experience and makes him or her less dependent on a single personality.[52] Being nurtured by men, as well as women, can alter the formation of sex-typed personality structures in young children that have been associated with exclusively women-nurtured girls and boys.[53] It provides the child with a more accessible dad and a more balanced view of mom.

Many individual women and couples have forged ahead and created their own alternatives. They split shifts, or job share, or find good day-care, or form cooperatives with other couples like themselves.[54] For the most part, however, women have been trapped. They have borne the burden of rearing their children, because as individuals they lacked the insight and/or resources to alter the traditional arrangement.

Support services for parents of young children, fathers and mothers, are needed. Nonprofit, neighborhood-based child-care centers, flex-time work schedules, and reliable after-school programs are a few solutions that have been implemented in some places. But there is no way to accomplish these changes on a large scale without a change in social values.[55] Our society does not value children. They are viewed as enjoyable objects, necessary to complete a family, but not as valuable or inspiring members of society. There is little recognition on the part of adult society that children contribute something special to the family, the neighborhood, and the community. Children traditionally were valuable as additional productive members of the family; now they are costly. Women traditionally had few options outside of marriage and motherhood, but they were important economic contributors to the family. Now women have more options, but there is no place for kids in the lives of two independent spouses—unless they share responsibilities. That requires a change in social values.

A college professor, author, and mother of three whom I interviewed[56] analyzed it this way:

> I went to a conference about four years ago and the topic we discussed was: Can a feminist scholar who has multiple roles perform at the highest professional level? Then, I kept insisting, "Yes, damn it, I'm just as smart as anybody else." Now I would really modify that. If you're talking about becoming *the expert* in a field and putting out the kind of professional pressure of sixty-hour weeks that you would have to do to achieve that, the answer is probably no. But I also think that's not a question for women. It's a question for people. The same thing is true for men. You read about people who are in high levels of government service that never see their families. . . . I think that's a choice that people have to make about what kind of people they want to be. When I do commit myself to writing a book, writing a paper, doing a study, I try to do it at the highest professional level. I make sure the task is the best I can make of it. But as far as saying I have got to get ten books out in ten years, or by the time I'm forty-five, no.

NOTES

1. Jan Hendrick van den Berg, *Dubious Maternal Affection* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1972), 9–10.
2. Barbara Harris, "Careers, Conflict, and Children: The Legacy of the Cult of Domesticity," in Alan Roland and Barbara Harris, eds., *Career and Motherhood: Struggles for a New Identity* (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1979), 71.
3. See John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979), chap. 2, for a detailed description of the division of labor between the sexes in subsistence farm families of the midwest.
4. Phillipe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood* (New York: Knopf, 1962), has pointed out that childhood itself is a relatively recent invention.
5. Eli Zaretsky, *Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1976).
6. Bernice Lott, *Becoming a Woman* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1981), 206.
7. Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body: Woman's Right* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1976), 403.
8. Robert Wells, "Women's Lives Transformed: Demographic and Family Patterns in America, 1600–1970," in Carol Ruth Berkin and Mary Beth Norton, eds., *Women of America: A History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), 18.
9. In 1960 the fertility rate per woman was 3.7 children; in 1970, it was 2.5; in 1980, it was 1.8. See National Center for Health Statistics, "Advance Report on Final Natality Statistics, 1980," *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, 31(8), Supp., DHHS Pub. no. (PHS)83–1120, Nov. 1982, 13.
10. Lott, *Becoming a Woman*, 213.
11. Matina Horner, "Femininity and Successful Achievement: A Basic Inconsistency," in Michele Hoffnung Garskof, ed., *Roles Women Play* (Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1971), 98. Although Horner's empirical work has not been successfully replicated, her descriptions of the problems for women are still apt.
12. Janet Dreyfus Gray, in "The Married Professional Woman: An Examination of Her Role Conflicts and Coping Strategies," *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 1983, 7(3), 235–43, points out that this is a less effective coping strategy among married professional women.
13. Shirley S. Angrist and Elizabeth M. Almquist, *Careers and Contingencies* (New York: Dunellen, 1975), 67.
14. Michele Hoffnung, "Working Mothers: Alternatives to Stereotyped Mothering" (Paper presented to the National Conference on Feminist Psychology, Dallas, Mar. 1979).
15. In a recent study, Michele Hoffnung, *Motherhood: Choices and Conflicts of Contemporary Women*, in preparation, I found that twenty out of thirty mothers had worked at least one year before having a child, fifteen had worked more than one year.
16. Grace Heckinger, "Happy Mother's Day," *Newsweek*, May 11, 1981, 19.
17. These women are in their forties and fifties. In earlier times active mothering would span forty years, rather than the current twenty, and the average woman's life was shorter. See Mary P. Ryan, *Womanhood in America: From Colonial Times to the Present*, 2d ed. (New York: New Viewpoints, 1979), 26.
18. Shirley L. Radl, in *Mother's Day Is Over* (New York: Charterhouse, 1973), discusses many of the costs to women based on her own experience.
19. Angela Barron McBride, *The Growth and Development of Mothers* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), chap. 1.
20. Michele Hoffnung Garskof, "The Psychology of the Maternity Ward: A Study in Dehumanization," in *Proceedings of the First International Childbirth Conference* (Stamford, Conn.: New Moon Publications, 1973).

21. Helena Znaniecki Lopata, *Occupation Housewife* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 200. Lopata's extensive interviews with Chicago area women led her to the conclusion that only full-time involvement outside the home reduced this discontinuity, since it prevented the abrupt and complete change in life activity that usually accompanies the birth of the first child.
22. Unpublished data by Feldman (1962) as reported in Edward Pohlman, *Psychology of Birth Planning* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1969), chap. 6.
23. John Newson and Elizabeth Newson, *Infant Care in an Urban Community* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963).
24. Jane Lazarre, in *The Mother Knot* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976), gives an excellent personal account of these ambivalent feelings.
25. McBride, *The Growth and Development of Mothers*, chap. 3.
26. Norman K. Denzin, *Children and Their Caretakers* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1973). See also Elaine Heffner, *Mothering* (New York: Anchor, 1980), which stresses the need to trust oneself as a mother.
27. Van den Berg, *Dubious Maternal Affection*, 74.
28. Philip Wylie, *Generation of Vipers* (New York: Farrar, 1942); Hans Sebald, *Momism: The Silent Disease of America* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1976).
29. Jessie Bernard, *The Future of Motherhood* (New York: Penguin, 1974), 9.
30. Sylvia Brody and Sidney Axelrod, *Mothers, Fathers, and Children* (New York: International Universities Press, 1978), 238–39.
31. Pohlman, *Psychology of Birth Planning*, 36. Judith Guss Teicholz, in "Psychological Correlates of Voluntary Childlessness in Married Women" (Paper presented to the Eastern Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., Mar. 1978), reports that, although fertility rates have decreased, statistics do not indicate an increase in the number of married couples that have chosen to remain childless. Throughout the twentieth century a constant 5 percent of the married population has chosen childlessness.
32. Pohlman, *Psychology of Birth Planning*, chap. 4, presents a detailed discussion of reasons. See Ellen Peck and Judith Lenderowitz, *Pronatalism* (New York: Crowell, 1974), for a full discussion of pronatalism.
33. Esther Menaker, "Some Inner Conflicts of Women in a Changing Society," in Roland and Harris, *Career and Motherhood*, 90.
34. Pauline Bart, "The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Mother," in Jo Freeman, ed., *Women: A Feminist Perspective*, 2d ed. (Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1979), 257.
35. Lillian B. Rubin, *Women of a Certain Age: The Midlife Search for Self* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 6.
36. Ibid., 120.
37. Ibid., chaps. 7 and 8. Also Gail Sheehy, *Passages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life* (New York: Dutton, 1976), discusses these problems.
38. Tillie Olson's "Tell Me A Riddle" in Olson, *Tell Me A Riddle* (New York: Dell Laurel Edition, 1976), 72–125, is a wonderful story about how the assignment of full-time home and child care changes the character of a woman.
39. Harriet B. Presser, "Social Factors Affecting the Timing of the First Child," in Warren B. Miller and Lucille F. Newman, eds., *The First Child and Family Formation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Carolina Population Center, 1978), 159. See also Pamela Daniels and Kathy Weingarten, *Sooner or Later: The Timing of Parenthood in Adult Lives* (New York: Norton, 1982).
40. Hoffnung, *Motherhood: Choices and Conflicts*.

41. Allyson Sherman Grossman, "Special Labor Force Reports—Summaries: Working Mothers and Their Children," *Monthly Labor Review*, May 1981, 59–64.
42. Hechinger, "Happy Mother's Day," 19.
43. As reported in Alice H. Cook, *The Working Mother* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978), 29.
44. Hoffnung, "Working Mothers," 9–11.
45. Robert O. Blood and Donald M. Wolfe, *Husbands and Wives: The Dynamics of Married Living* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960), 63–65. Also see Sarah Fenstermaker Berk, "Husbands at Home: Organization of the Husband's Household Day," in Karen Wolk Feinstein, ed., *Working Women and Families*, (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1979), 125–58.
46. S. Shirley Feldman and Sharon Churnin Nash, "The Effect of Family Formation on Sex-stereotypic Behavior: A Study of Responsiveness to Babies," in Miller and Newman, eds., *The First Child and Family Formation*, 55.
47. Gail Sheehy, in *Pathfinders* (New York: Morrow, 1981), describes this as her personal solution.
48. Barbara Harris, "Two Lives, One 24-Hour Day," in Roland and Harris, eds., *Career and Motherhood*, presents a personal and intelligent discussion of these problems.
49. Richard Q. Bell and Lawrence V. Harper, *Child Effects on Adults* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1977), 214, 65.
50. Lois M. Verbrugge, "Women's Social Roles and Health," in Phyllis W. Berman and Estelle R. Ramey, eds., *Women: A Developmental Perspective* (Bethesda, Md.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, 1982), 58–59.
51. Joseph H. Pleck and Jack Sawyer, *Men and Masculinity* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 53. See also Marc Feign Fasteau, *The Male Machine* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974); Deborah S. David and Robert Brannon, eds., *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976); Joe L. Dubbert, *A Man's Place* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979); and Warren Farrell, *The Liberated Man* (New York: Random House, 1974), for discussions of weaknesses in the male role definition and the positive value of child care in men's lives.
52. Bruno Bettelheim, *The Children of the Dream* (London: Macmillan, 1969), 305–6.
53. See Dorothy Dinnerstein, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); and Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).
54. Robert Rapoport and Rhonda Rapoport, *Working Couples* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1978); and Feinstein, ed., *Working Women and Families*.
55. See Alan Pifer, "Women Working: Toward a New Society," in Feinstein, ed., *Working Women and Families*, 13–34, for fuller discussion of this issue.
56. The interviewee was a forty-year-old political scientist married sixteen years to a biologist. Michele Hoffnung, "Mystique of Motherhood: Conflicting Values," *Quinnipiac Today*, Dec. 1982, 5.

JILL NORGREN

Child care

Child care is an economic issue, a family issue, and in some countries, a population issue. But in the United States, like most industrial societies, child care is first and foremost a women's issue. Despite the enormous number of mothers who have entered the labor force in recent years, and some consequent modest restyling of family responsibilities, women remain the primary agents of child rearing.

Not surprisingly, public child-care policies have been determined most often by factors other than the needs of women. In the United States, opposition to maternal employment and fear of government intervention in the life of the family have created a deep current of opposition to public child-care initiatives. As a result of this broad suspicion, the episodic acceptance of child-care legislation reflected special historical circumstances, such as war or economic depression. More recently, child care has been used as a means of manipulating welfare participation and as a poultice for social pathologies such as mentally ill or absent parents and educational disadvantages. In Europe, child-care programs have been associated with labor policy or used as countermeasures to population decline. Recently, a few governments have broadened the rationale underlying their child-care legislation to include specifically aiding women as mothers. Nonetheless, passage of child-care legislation generally does not reflect a commitment to sexual equality or even an acknowledgment of the greater parental burden placed on women.

Child-care policy refers to a cluster of public programs and benefits offered by the government to influence the care of children. Most prominent—particularly in the United States—are group and family day-care programs, but child-care policy also encompasses tax credits, paid and unpaid child-care leave for parents, flexible parental work schedules, and various cash allowances to facilitate child rearing. Until Congress passed child-care tax credit legislation in 1976, the major child-care benefits and sevices available in the United States were day-care and family allowances based on means tests (only families below certain income levels qualify): only mothers on welfare are "paid" to rear their children (Aid to Families with Dependent Children), only poor families receive categorical program benefits (food, housing, medical care), and only income-eligible families may use

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public day-care centers. For the middle-class parent, help comes only through the limited mechanism of the income tax laws.[1] In the United States, child care is primarily a private responsibility.

THE NEED

When a mother makes the decision to go to work or to school, she must find child care. In 1981 there were more than 18 million working mothers in the United States. This was more than half of all mothers with children under eighteen.[2] By contrast, in 1940, only 9 percent of the mothers in this category worked outside the home.[3] The number of working mothers has been increasing steadily since the late 1940s, but the most dramatic surge has been among women with the greatest child-care needs—mothers with children under six. In 1950, 12 percent of women with preschool children worked; by 1980, that figure had nearly quadrupled to 45 percent. In the same period, the percentage of working mothers with children six to seventeen doubled (from just under 30 percent to 60 percent).[4] In terms of children, these changes mean that there are currently 32 million children under eighteen with working mothers. More than 8 million of these children are under six;[5] demographers project that the number of preschool children will exceed 10 million by 1990.[6]

Public and private day-care programs have not expanded to meet the needs of these millions of children and parents. Licensed centers currently have places for about one million, or less than one-eighth, of the children under six with working mothers.[7] These centers are supplemented by a limited number of licensed family day-care homes where care is provided in particular for children under three.

Clearly, a majority of families cannot make child-care arrangements in a licensed program and must settle for something less formal in their own home or someone else's. The most recent survey of child-care arrangements for preschool children whose mothers work full-time indicates that 20 percent were cared for in their own homes, most often by the father or another relative; another 8 percent stayed with their mothers at work; and a larger number, 47 percent, were cared for in someone else's home—usually not that of a relative.[8] An unknown number of preschool children, and thousands of young school-age children, care for themselves. They are called "latchkey" children in reference to the house keys many wear on strings around their necks.[9]

Child-care arrangements follow patterns associated with the length of a mother's workday, her marital and financial status, and the age and number of her children. These patterns have changed significantly over the past twenty years along with women's participation in the work force. Use of group day care, for example, has increased threefold, a trend that is particularly pronounced among children of well-educated, full-time working mothers, and mothers with relatively high family incomes.[10] A marked change has also occurred in the use of care provided in a home other than that of the child's family: 27 percent of children under six with full-time working mothers received care in someone else's home in 1958; this rose to 47 percent in 1977.[11] The trend among full-time working women clearly has been to establish out-of-home care.

Women who work part-time, on the other hand, use in-home care more often. They are twice as likely to depend on child care by the child's father, and they are able to keep their children with them on the job more frequently.[12] All mothers experience particular difficulty arranging for care for infants. The number of group centers that will take children under two is extremely small, and even neighbors and relatives are often reluctant to take on the work and responsibility of a very young child.[13]

In the past, women relied on older siblings, fathers, neighbors, and in-laws to provide child care; this is less possible today. Smaller families have diminished the number of older children available as caretakers, neighboring women and female in-laws are now likely to be out working, and divorce often results in the loss of help from the father—and in-laws.

There is no question that parents want more day-care programs: the increased use of group centers and nonrelatives demonstrates this demand. So do the waiting lists common at centers, nursery schools, and family day-care programs. Conveniently located quality programs do not experience underenrollment. The problem, then, is our failure to expand programs and, even more astonishing in light of increased maternal employment, to reverse the funding cutbacks of the 1970s and 1980s that have resulted in the closing of centers and termination of child-care subsidies for thousands of families.[14]

The insistence that child rearing be primarily a mother's responsibility, combined with the failure to provide adequate child-care programs, places a heavy and unequal burden on women. Job opportunities, job advancement, and lifetime earnings remain lower for women than for men, in part because of unreliable and inadequate child care. A 1981 report from the U.S. Commission for Civil Rights acknowledges this inequity and points to government responsibility: "[W]omen as workers and students, especially minority women, continue to be disadvantaged when compared with men" because federal child-care programs are "inadequate to meet the current or projected need."[15]

The inequality of opportunity experienced by all mothers in need of child care is particularly acute among low-income women. While the Civil Rights Commission speaks out about the devastating impact of the government's child-care policy, other public officials continue to support such discriminatory policy. With myopic vision, officials repeatedly conclude that, when its cost exceeds the immediate earning power of a woman, the provision of child care is a poor (and therefore unacceptable) investment. The long-term social and financial opportunities lost to the woman, her family, and society are ignored. A study carried out in New York City has recently found public day care to be an important factor in helping low-income women maintain self-sufficiency. When the city closed seventy-seven day-care centers in the 1970s, 40 percent of the affected low-income mothers experienced new problems with job punctuality, while 30 percent could not avoid increased absenteeism. As a result, some women who were previously considered good employees were fired. The authors conclude that, lacking reliable, low-cost day care, the women under study had to create "elaborate schemes for survival."[16] Throughout the country, mothers in need of child care face these dilemmas every day.

AMERICAN DAY CARE IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Contemporary attitudes toward day care, including the continued use of a means test, reflect its origins as a charitable service for the children of destitute and poor working mothers. Wealthy women began day nurseries in this country during the nineteenth century, borrowing from the European institution of the *garderie* or *crèche*. The first center in the United States was opened in 1838 to provide care for the children of seamen's wives and widows.[17] In 1854, the first New York City center was started at the Nursery and Child's Hospital. Following the Civil War, the number of nurseries expanded, as veterans' widows and an increasing number of immigrant women found themselves the sole supports of their families. These nurseries were bleak institutions, reflecting the class distinctions of the society and the belief that those who accepted charity were inferior and morally weak.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a quite separate program, kindergarten, made its appearance in the United States. Inspired by the work of Friedrich Froebel and Maria Montessori, kindergartens stressed the social and intellectual development of the child, not custodial care. Day care and kindergartens grew out of two fundamentally different traditions and came to be thought of quite distinctly. Day nurseries served the children of working parents; kindergartens provided for preschool educational and developmental needs. These functions are not mutually exclusive, yet two distinct institutions were formed in the late nineteenth century and maintained separately until the 1970s, when the unmet demand for day care and the positive influence of Project Headstart led to reevaluation of old biases toward day care.

One reason why day-care centers did not evolve into all-day kindergartens with a positive public image was the influence of the newly professionalized social workers hired by centers in the 1920s. Although the client families thought of themselves as normal, hard-working people with a share of life's problems, these professionals emphasized social pathologies among parents and children. They thought of the families as abnormal, and insisted on the use of intake procedures (gathering data on their lives) and social work formal casework. Eventually, this imparted the aura of a social welfare service to day care. The public fixed a negative image on day care, thinking the centers were for "troubled" families only. Reputation and reality reinforced each other. Teachers perceived the difference and chose to work in kindergartens and elementary schools rather than day nurseries. The middle class, which did not approve of having mothers work outside the home, simply did not use the day nurseries.[18]

Until the Depression, group day care evolved locally according to the need and the response of community philanthropic and social welfare organizations. The Depression, and later World War II, provided new reasons for day care and the opportunity to redefine both its purpose and its clientele. In 1933, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), later known as the Works Progress Administration (WPA), anxious to create work for unemployed school personnel, authorized state departments of education to open centers offering full day care at federal expense. Nearly 2,000 centers, some with preschool education programs, were established. After meeting a means test, thousands of children were enrolled.[19]

As the economy improved in the early 1940s, the rationale for Washington's involvement diminished. During the phaseout, however, wartime labor shortages prompted a reappraisal of federally subsidized day care. Suddenly the government found it necessary to encourage millions of women to enter the work force as part of the war effort.[20] Care of the children of these new workers became a compelling public issue. Initially, grants for child-care centers were made from the President's Emergency Fund, but, in 1941, the Community Facilities Act, better known as the Lanham Act, was amended to permit appropriations for day care—in "war-impacted" areas only. Until 1946, the states and Washington shared, 50–50, the cost of child care for women engaged in war-related work. Nationwide 1,600,000 children attended centers financed with funds from Washington, while their mothers worked in wartime industries.[21] Every state except New Mexico had some day-care centers; California headed the list with nearly 400.[22]

The WPA and Lanham Act programs each contained the seeds of change. By hiring teachers, the WPA centers had inadvertently mixed an educational curriculum with custodial care. Because wartime day care was part of the national labor policy, child care was dissociated in the public eye from the earlier means-tested, social welfare context. But, although short-term events (a depressed economy and the war) had caused the government to project, and the public to perceive, day care in a positive light, deep-seated assumptions continued to hamper the redefinition of day care. The biases of professionals and other opinion leaders who did not believe that mothers should be employed were clear even during the war. Staff members at the Children's Bureau in Washington, for example, fought the placement of centers in convenient locations, because mothers might be tempted to maintain their employment after the war emergency.[23]

At the conclusion of the war, these biases emerged forcefully once more. Officials urged that traditional roles be reestablished and argued that women would not want to take jobs away from returning soldiers. Mothers belonged at home; only "troubled" families needed day care. Good parents understood the (implied) destructiveness of unnecessary, whimsical maternal employment. Moreover, while post–New Deal politics were grounded in the philosophy of government as a growth industry, the family—at least in rhetoric—remained an institution not to be violated by the hand of the state. Publicly sponsored day care was thought too intrusive.

With the end of the Depression and World War II, federal support for day care died. Parents, labor leaders, and child-care professionals were unable to capitalize on the existence of a program to keep it going. In Chicago there had been twenty-three centers during the war; by 1968, there were none in all of Illinois. Eighty centers operated in Detroit in the early 1940s, but ten years after the conclusion of the war just three remained.[24] Publicly funded centers survived only where local governments agreed to subsidize them, as they did in New York and California.

The federal government did not fund day care again until 1962. Responding to strong pressure from social work professionals and socially concerned women allied in the National Committee for Day Care, Congress authorized several million dollars to aid local day-care agencies. The focus of this 1962 Public Welfare Amendments legislation, however, continued to be on child care as a social welfare service for troubled families. None of the lobbyists or legislators argued for a more comprehensive policy that would help women as mothers or working parents. A pamphlet put out in the mid-1960s by the Children's Bureau highlights this bias:

> Who needs day care?
>
> Giorgi does. When his father deserted the family. . . .
>
> Esther does. She is 4 and mentally retarded. Her parents want her to live at home but are finding this . . . difficult. . . .
>
> Paul does . . . and so do his (8) brothers and sisters. . . . Their father is unemployed, their mother hospitalized. The family lives in two rooms in a slum tenement. . . . [25]

Shortly after passage of this day-care bill, Congress approved the funding of a new preschool program, Headstart, as part of the 1964 Economic Act. Designed to give poor children a "head start" by means of an enriched preschool experience, the program continued the means-tested tradition but, for the first time, consciously provided comprehensive rather than merely custodial preschool child care. It is not surprising that Project Headstart was an immediate success. The centers resembled the nursery schools of the middle class, whose social and educational benefits had long been appreciated by families too poor to afford them. Less predictably, the middle class also formed a positive image of Headstart. Better off parents and educators began to suggest that the United States should have widely available, non-means-tested child care based on Headstart's principle of comprehensive care.

Legislators were not ready for comprehensive child care, nor were they prepared to eliminate income eligibility tests. Using the politically safe label of "welfare reform," however, Congress significantly expanded federal appropriations for day care as part of the 1967 Social Security Amendments. This legislation provided unlimited matching funds to the states for day-care services (1) to participants in the government's Work Incentive Program (WIN), and (2) to past, present, and potential recipients of welfare. While it was still desirable for mothers to stay at home, in the case of poor women Congress and the president decided to make an exception.

The blunt goal of the 1967 legislation was to reduce the public welfare burden, but the eligibility requirements proved so flexible (who cannot present herself as a "potential" welfare recipient?) and the funding so generous that publicly sponsored day care blossomed all over the country. Working-class mothers and even aggressive middle-class mothers, benefited from the expansion of facilities.[26]

Families liked what they found at these centers: reliable, increasingly high quality, inexpensive child care. As more and more women returned to work and the incipient women's movement demanded child care as a social right, parents, educators, union leaders, and antipoverty spokeswomen pressed Congress for a comprehensive child-care bill (loosely modeled on Headstart). In 1971, sponsors agreed on the Comprehensive Child Development Act (Title V of the Economic Opportunity Amendments). While the act still relied on means tests, it defined a program of cognitive and social development for children, accompanied by medical support services. For most of the twentieth century Americans had thought of day-care centers as bleak, unhealthy places to be used only in desperation. It now appeared that public attitudes had finally changed and that the tremendous need for inexpensive, even free, child care would be addressed.

Optimism over the bill ran too high. Although Congress approved the legislation, President Richard Nixon vetoed it, arguing that it would "sovietize" American families.[27] The Nixon veto not only killed this legislation but also tipped the delicate political balance away from a comprehensive child-care policy. Americans had long thought negatively about day care, although the success of Headstart and the nurseries of the kibbutzim had done much to alter middle-class images. By playing on powerful cold war fears of a sovietized society, Nixon had recast the debate, and day care was newly stigmatized. Despite the increasing visibility of the women's movement, the rise in maternal employment, and the arguments of child development experts, the tone of Nixon's message skillfully touched on just those aspects of the American political ethos that had impeded child-care legislation in the past.

The 1971 veto did more than temporarily halt legislative action, it also abetted retrenchment. In 1972, child-care supporters tried to revive the comprehensive bill but were unsuccessful; that same year, they also failed to block imposition of a funding ceiling on social services including day care. Subsequent bills, including the Mondale-Brademas Child and Family Services Act, 1975, and the Cranston Child Care Act, 1979, also failed, as "new right" lobbying against day care and public worry about expenditures for social programs increased. While congressional support for additional funds rose in the mid-1970s, the executive branch remained cool. President Gerald Ford vetoed an important supplemental appropriation bill for day care but was persuaded to sign a revised version in 1976 after congressional Republicans convinced him that a second veto would be politically dangerous eight weeks before the national elections. Though not actually put to the test, President Jimmy Carter also indicated that he would veto any major day-care bill. As a result, although nearly half of all American mothers with preschool children now work, the federal government, as we discuss next, provides only scanty, means-tested day care. Since 1967, there has been no bill providing directly for an expanded program of care. Congress initiated a child-care tax credit as part of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, but this attempt at social policy through taxation is both inadequate and inequitable.

CHILD-CARE BENEFITS AND SERVICES: THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE

In the United States, parents who work have to create "elaborate schemes for survival" because public child-care benefits and services are not widely available. The variety and extensive coverage of many national child-care policies in Europe make a striking contrast to those of the United States. Many observers feel that there is a great deal to be learned from the range of child-care options available to European women and their families.

In Europe there is also a large and growing population of working mothers. The numbers, of course, differ from country to country. Unlike the United States, however, these countries agree on the acceptability of government intervention in the life of the family. Thus, while no European government has been able to provide all of the child care that is needed—or that has been promised—there exists a public commitment to make child care available regardless of family income. Ironically, the development of child-care policies in Europe has often been a function of the need for labor or the desire to encourage population growth, not concern for the equality of women. Nonetheless, European women of all backgrounds have access to programs and benefits not available to American mothers and their families.

Child-care programs and services fall into six categories: family and group day-care; maternity and child-care leaves; short-term sick-child leave and housework days; family allowances; tax credits; and flexible work schedules.

Family and Group Day Care

In the United States, parents who meet fairly rigid income qualifications may try to place their child in a government-sponsored group or family day-care program or a Headstart program. There are often waiting lists. Since Headstart generally enrolls children for only a half of the day, parents who work full-time must make additional child-care arrangements. Public programs for infants and toddlers are sorely inadequate relative to need, and the overall number of children cared for in government-sponsored programs is limited. It has been estimated that, before child-care budget cuts made by the Reagan administration, 750,000 children attended government-funded group or family day-care programs, and 372,000 children were enrolled in Headstart.[28] Inadequate public funds limit the expansion of child-care facilities, but continuing use of a means test also excludes many families who would otherwise clearly use public day-care centers.

No country in Europe has been able to build a day-care program large enough to meet parental demand. France and East Germany provide the most extensive preschool center programs. In East Germany, nearly half of all children under three and 90 percent of children three to six are cared for in centers. Maintaining an adequate work force remains at the core of East German child-care policy. France has nearly equaled the East German record. The popularity of the free *écoles maternelles* has caused overcrowding despite the fact that the days and hours do not match the requirements of working parents, and these nurseries close for lunch.

A pattern of dual child-care systems—one for children up to age two or three and another for older children—appears all over Europe. Infant day care is more difficult and expensive to provide and, as a result, enrollment capacity for this is lower everywhere.

In West Germany, where grandmothers are still the primary caretakers in the absence of mothers, there has been virtually no effort to provide more public day care. Grandmothers are also important in the Soviet Union, where a young woman's mother may take her pension early in order to become a child-minder. The Hungarians, unable to meet the demand for center care, particularly for children under three, have become increasingly tolerant of privately paid baby-sitting arrangements, although private market arrangements were previously frowned upon. Even the Swedes make extensive use of paid baby-sitters.

Maternity and Child-Care Leaves

In Europe it is believed that children are a major resource of the society and that the entire society should share the cost of child rearing. This attitude is expressed most consistently across Europe through the policy of paid maternity leave or, in a few countries, unpaid leave with job protection. Generally, paid maternity leave permits a woman to withdraw from her job several weeks before the birth of her child and to remain at home as long as five months after the child's arrival. Maternal child-care leave is most liberal (in terms of time) in Hungary, where mothers may stay out of the labor force for three years while receiving a cash grant of one-third to one-half an average woman's salary. Encouraging *women* to stop work and stay at home, however, is an expression of conservative social biases whose implications must be examined by feminists. I will come back to this issue at the conclusion of this article.

Only Sweden permits a *father* to take paid leave. A total of nine months can be shared with the mother. The fact that barely 10 percent of Swedish fathers have done this disappoints, and even worries, some Swedish feminists.[29]

In contrast to the policies of these European governments, the United States does not grant paid maternity or child-care leave as a matter of social right. Indeed, neither federal equal opportunity legislation nor the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) guidelines that prohibit sex discrimination as part of Title VII require that mothers be permitted to take unpaid nonmedical maternity or child-care leave without penalty.[30] As a result of pressure from feminists, however, a number of private businesses grant unpaid, and occasionally paid, maternity leave. Similarly, some public sector employees have won the right to unpaid maternity and child-care leave without loss of seniority, through union agreements. These arrangements, however, fall short of a national policy that would grant these rights to all women.

Short-Term Leaves

Although sick-child or housework leave is not as common as maternity leave, in many European countries mothers or fathers receive a fixed number of days of paid leave for a sick child. Several countries also have a separate policy of paid personal leave days. In West Germany, for example, once a month mothers with children under the age of fourteen may take a paid day off from work as a "housework day." Recently, a single father challenged this mothers-only policy, asserting that it constituted a denial of equal protection.[31]

In the United States there is no public benefit equivalent to sick-child leave or housework days. But again some union contracts and company policies permit employees personal leave days that can be used for child care. The number of personal leave days, however, is considerably smaller than the average sick-child leave granted European parents.

Family Allowances

Direct cash allowances and subsidies for families in the United States are means-tested. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and government programs of subsidized food, housing, and medical care are not available to families whose incomes rise above designated income levels. European family benefit programs tend to be more liberal, since they were designed both to achieve income redistribution and to provide societal support for child rearing regardless of income. Because child allowances were used in the past to encourage population growth, several European countries provide this benefit only after the birth of the second child. In Europe the family allowance is most often a cash allowance, calculated according to the number of children, but it may include housing, food, clothing, and medical subsidies.

Tax Credits

Government-sponsored child-care programs and benefits in the United States that give direct help are income-related and thus not available to middle-class families. As a result of pressure from the women's movement, Congress approved a tax measure in 1976 that provides indirect child-care aid to parents who work or go to school, regardless of income. This child-care tax credit helps parents recover part of the cost of care for children under fifteen. A tax credit proved more attractive to lawmakers than expanded funding for day-care centers, because a credit requires neither visible appropriations (the cost is all in lost tax revenue) nor proliferating centers that might leave legislators open to charges of "sovietizing" American children.

Many feminists contend that the tax credit puts the cart before the horse by providing reimbursement for a service that is in short supply. The credit helps families who succeed in finding child care, but it does nothing to make day-care services more abundant. A tax credit also fails to help parents whose income is too low to owe taxes and those not sufficiently sophisticated to know how to apply for the credit. Still other parents cannot claim the credit because they have hired baby-sitters who refuse to have their income reported for tax or social security purposes. In baby-sitting, where the pay is low, such informal arrangements are common.

In Europe, tax deductions and credits are a far less important component of child-care policy than in the United States, because European governments use more direct forms of aid. In West Germany, tax exemptions for children were replaced in 1975 with a flat rate, tax-free child allowance. France combines an extensive family allowance package with tax benefits.[32]

Flexible Work Schedules

Flexible schedules for parents have received considerable attention both in the United States and in European countries. Some child-care problems of working parents, it has been argued, could be addressed by permitting parents of young children to work shorter days or to telescope a regular workweek into three or four long days. Despite discussion of the potential of flexible schedules, there has been only a minimum of success in implementing government policies mandating the right to a flexible work schedule. Swedish parents have won a six-hour-day option with lessened compensation.[33] Both here and abroad, flex-time and shorter workdays more often result from private arrangements between employer and employee.

THE IMPACT OF TRADITIONAL ATTITUDES

With the number of working mothers in the United States so large, why has the government failed to meet the need for day care or to provide other child-care options that might aid women? The answer lies in the negative impact of social and political attitudes concerning mothers and child care.

Most Americans have been brought up to believe that women, and in particular mothers, belong at home. Until a decade ago, opinion leaders not only supported this point of view but also ignored the obvious evidence that mothers were joining the labor force in record numbers. Armed with their beliefs and the myth of mother-at-home, most policymakers simply failed to acknowledge that a public child-care policy was necessary.

The general belief that mothers should not work outside the home has been systematically nurtured by social workers, educators, and psychologists. Aided by the media, these professionals have told women and their families that the physical and mental health of children depends on the continuous presence of the mother: "the rearing environment of the child was presumed to be altered by her unavailability to her family and by the various child care figures substituted for her."[34] The work of John Bowlby on maternal deprivation among British children during World War II has been repeatedly drawn upon to argue the importance of having mothers stay at home. But Bowlby's study, and others, analyzed the problems of children who were living twenty-four hours a day in an institution. These studies tell little about the effects on children of being placed in child care eight hours a day.[35] As Milton Willner has pointed out, Bowlby's study was concerned with maternal deprivation, not separation.[36]

Work by B. M. Caldwell and others on the effects of day-care center attendance does not support the drastic predictions of maternal deprivation theory. Quite to the contrary, children of all ages on the average thrive both socially and intellectually when placed in quality child-care programs.[37] Mothers also thrive, and become healthier, more stable parents, when the availability of day care gives them greater options for organizing their lives.

CONCLUSION

In the early part of the twentieth century, maternal health legislation and child labor laws were attacked by some Americans as "a socialist plot that would lead to control over the family."[38] Sixty years later, the issue of whether—or to what degree—the family is a private social institution remains unresolved. As political scientist Jean Robinson has observed, there is still an assumption that the family is a "natural construction and not subject to social manipulation."[39]

Betty Friedan has written that "dispelling the mystique of the family"—the recently described "classical family of Western nostalgia"—"may be even more threatening to some than unmasking the feminine mystique was a decade ago."[40] Advocates of a public child-care policy in the United States have had to fight both mystiques: the feminine mystique that insisted on only a domestic role for women and the mystique of the family that glorified this institution as a self-sufficient unit that would be debilitated by government intervention. By instituting the child-care tax credit, the government has tacitly acknowledged women's changing roles, but the lack of any comprehensive child-care policy confirms its fundamental unwillingness to change public responsibilities vis-à-vis the family.

In Europe, governments have been more responsive to demands for a child-care policy, although European attitudes on the place of women are similar to those of Americans. Wars and political revolutions have made child-care programs a means of stimulating both population growth and labor force participation, and they are less often identified with aid to the needy. As a result, negative attitudes toward working women and state intervention have been more readily neutralized.

The accelerated use of child-care leave raises an important question about the future direction and impact of European child-care policy—and American policy if such a program should become popular here. Through such policies, working mothers are increasingly permitted, even encouraged, to stay at home. By paying these mothers, providing job security, and continuing pension entitlements, European governments have made it easier for women to drop out of the labor force. Because such leave is generally designated for mothers only, and benefits are often considerably less than a regular salary, these policies can easily reinforce traditional attitudes identifying women as primary nurturers and secondary wage earners. Feminists should not lose sight of this as they propose child-care options.

Child-care policy decisions reflect societal attitudes toward female roles and influence future opportunities for women. In the United States, the women's movement has paid too little attention to child-care policy. Given the importance of child care to the lives of women with children, it is time for feminists to define a defensible child-care policy and demand it as a social right. Because large-scale social programs are out of favor, obtaining any greater government commitment to child care will be difficult. Yet without comprehensive child care, women will never gain equality.

NOTES

1. This includes the tax deduction for dependent children, the child-care tax credit, and the deduction for extensive medical expenses. Congress has recently debated tax relief for families using private and parochial schools.

2. Allyson Sherman Grossman, "More Than Half of All Children Have Working Mothers," *Monthly Labor Review*, Feb. 1982, 41.
3. U.S. Department of Labor, *News Release 77–792*, Sept. 14, 1977, table 3.
4. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Trends in Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers*, Series P-23, no. 117 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, June 1982), 3.
5. Grossman, "More Than Half," 41.
6. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Trends in Child Care Arrangments*, 1.
7. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Child Care and Equal Opportunity for Women* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1981), 14.
8. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Trends in Child Care Arrangements*, 6–7.
9. Determining the number of children who care for themselves is difficult. Parents underreport children left on their own. Some questionnaires are vague. For example, "Do you leave your child alone?" does not differentiate children left for a few minutes after school from youngsters left on their own all day. For statistics on children left in their own care, see Seth Law and Pearl G. Spindler, *Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968), 70, and U.S. Department of Commerce, *Trends in Child Care Arrangements*, 6.
10. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Trends in Child Care Arrangements*, 3, 7.
11. Ibid., 6–7.
12. Ibid., 7.
13. Ibid., 7–8.
14. As a result of the fiscal crisis in New York City in 1975, seventy-seven day-care centers were closed and 5,000 places terminated. Compounding the problem, the federal government began a series of significant funding cutbacks for child care in 1981. Georgia L. McMurray and Dolores P. Kazanjian, *Day Care and the Working Poor* (New York: Community Service Society of New York, 1982), 4; Children's Defense Fund, *A Children's Defense Budget: An Analysis of the President's Budget and Children* (Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1982), 111–16.
15. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Child Care and Equal Opportunity*, 50–51 and chaps. 1 and 2.
16. McMurray and Kazanjian, *Day Care and the Working Poor*, ii, 7, 8, 13.
17. Sources differ on the date of the earliest European day nursery. According to Ethel Beer, *Working Mothers and the Day Nursery* (New York: Whiteside, Inc., 1957), 27, a Swiss minister opened a nursery in 1767 for children whose mothers worked in the fields. Others trace the day nursery to the Industrial Revolution and mention a discussion of it in Robert Owen's *Life of Robert Owen* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, Publishers, 1857–58). See Bernice Fleiss, *The Relationship of the Mayor's Committee on Wartime Care of Children to Day Care in New York City* (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1962), 1. For a discussion of the earliest American day nurseries, see Ethel Beer, *The Day Nursery* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1930), and William L. Pierce, "Day Care in the 1970's: Planning for Expansion," *Child Welfare* 50 (Mar. 1971):160.
18. Florence A. Ruderman, *Child Care and Working Mothers: A Study of Arrangements Made for Daytime Care of Children* (New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1968), 13, 19.
19. Rosalyn Baxandall, Linda Gordon, and Susan Reverby, *America's Working Women* (New York: Random House, 1976), 293.
20. Ibid.
21. Anna Mayer, *Day Care as a Social Instrument: A Policy Paper* (New York: Columbia University, School of Social Work, Jan. 1965), 24.

22. Rosalyn F. Baxandall, "Who Shall Care for Our Children? The History and Development of Day Care in the United States," in Jo Freeman (ed.), *Women: A Feminist Perspective*, 2d ed. (Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1979), 138.
23. Mayer, *Day Care as a Social Instrument*, 27.
24. Baxandall, "Who Shall Care for Our Children?" 138.
25. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Children's Bureau, Welfare Administration, *What Is Good Day Care?* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1964).
26. In New York City, for example, numerous day-care centers organized by professional families received public funds after arguing that child care was a social right regardless of income status. The Agency for Child Development subsidized these centers because the families had lobbied persistently and noisily.
27. See Richard Nixon, "Veto of Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1971," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Dec. 13, 1971, 1635–36. For a more comprehensive analysis of the politics of child care in the 1970s, see Jill Norgren, "In Search of a National Child-Care Policy: Background and Prospects," in Ellen Boneparth (ed.), *Women, Power and Policy* 124–43 (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982).
28. Children's Defense Fund, *A Children's Defense Budget*, 110.
29. Kathleen Teltsch, "Swedish Feminists See a New Sense of Apathy," *New York Times*, July 8, 1982, B6.
30. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Child Care and Equal Opportunity*, 44–46. The Supreme Court has ruled unconstitutional the mandatory termination of employment for pregnant women. See *Cleveland Board of Education v. La Fleur*, 414 U.S. 632 (1974). Earlier, the Court had ruled that the refusal of employers to hire women with preschool children was unconstitutional. See *Phillips v. Martin Marietta Corporation*, 400 U.S. 542 (1971).
31. "Single Fathers Are Entitled to 'Housework' Days," *The Week in Germany*, Nov. 27, 1981, 41.
32. Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn, *Child Care Family Benefits and Working Parents: A Study in Comparative Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 57–58, 64.
33. Ibid., 18.
34. Milton Willner, "Day Care: A Reassessment," *Child Welfare* 44 (Mar. 1965):126. Biases against day care show up in the wording of survey research questions. A recent General Mills American Family Report survey attempts to assay parental attitudes toward day care with the following item: "Parents can never be sure of how well children are being cared for in day-care centers." Why not cast the item in the positive: "Children are generally well-cared for in day-care centers"? See General Mills American Family Report, 1976–1977, *Raising Children in a Changing Society* (Minneapolis: General Mills, 1977), 112.
35. See John Bowlby, *Mental Care and Mental Health* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1951). For a contemporary statement of maternal deprivation theory, see Selma Fraiberg, *Every Child's Birthright: In Defense of Mothering* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).
36. Willner, "Day Care: A Reassessment," 126–127.
37. Among Caldwell's publications, see B. M. Caldwell and J. B. Richmond, "The Children's Center in Syracuse," in Laura L. Dittmann (ed.), *Early Child Care: The New Perspectives*, 326–58 (New York: Atherton, 1968); B. M. Caldwell, C. M. Wright, A. S. Honig, and J. Tannenbaum, "Infant Day Care and Attachment," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 40 (1970):397–412.
38. Boneparth, *Women, Power and Policy*, ix.

39. Jean Robinson, "The State and Family Policy in a Marxist-Leninist Society: Manipulating the Public–Private Dichotomy in the People's Republic of China" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 1980), 4.
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A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE
EQUAL PARTNERSHIP IN MARRIAGE
SEXISM IS A SOCIAL DISEASE

PART THREE

Growing Up Female

LENORE J. WEITZMAN

Sex-role socialization: A focus on women

In our society, adult women are more likely to be characterized as nurturant and emotional, while men are likely to be considered aggressive, active, and instrumental. How can these differences be explained? Are women "naturally" more emotional or are they taught to behave that way? Are men inherently more aggressive, or does our society socialize men into more aggressive roles?

Recent years have brought a new awareness of the extent to which we have been socialized to become the men and women we are today. This article examines the multitude of influences by which the socialization process shapes the roles that most women and men come to accept as entirely natural.

First, let us consider two important types of data which suggest that studying socialization will help us to understand sex roles today: data on the cross-cultural variation in sex roles, and data on children with biologically ambiguous sexual identities.

Anthropologists who have examined sex roles cross-culturally have found great diversity in the roles assumed "natural" for men and women and in the extent of differentiation between the sexes. Margaret Mead's classic study of three New Guinea tribes was the first to emphasize this cross-cultural variation in sex roles.[1] In one tribe, the Arapesh, Mead found both men and women who were regarded as cooperative, unaggressive, and responsive to the needs of others—characteristics we would normally label feminine or maternal. In a second society, the Mundugumor, Mead saw both men and women as aggressive, unresponsive, and individualistic—traits we would normally call masculine. Neither the Arapesh nor the Mundugumor ascribed contrasting personality characteristics to men and women: the Arapesh ideal man, like the ideal woman, was mild and responsive; the Mundugumor ideal for both man and woman was violent and aggressive. In a third (and more controversial) report of yet another society, the

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Tchambuli, Mead saw a reversal of the typical Western sex roles. The Tchambuli women were dominant, impersonal, and managing; the men were emotionally dependent.

Although Mead's findings are controversial because they have not been replicated by other anthropologists, they are nevertheless heuristically illuminating, because they make us question some of our basic assumptions about what is "natural." They suggest that what we assume is natural may be based on cultural beliefs rather than on biological necessity. For example, although we have long assumed that women are not fit for war (because they are naturally weaker and less aggressive than men), women in other societies, such as the Dahomey in Africa, have been great warriors.* Similarly, we have traditionally regarded women as flirtatious and seductive, but in parts of New Guinea "men are like Victorian women, they are at once prudish and flirtatious, fearful of sex yet preoccupied with love magic and cosmetics that will lead the maidens—who take the initiative in courtship—to be interested in them."[2]

The varied sex-role assignments given to men and women in different cultures suggest that the basic characteristics of men and women are not biologically determined; rather, they are based on cultural definitions of sex-appropriate behavior. Since we have no reason to assume that the biological makeup of men and women in Mead's tribes or in other societies differs from that of men and women in the United States in any basic way, the observed differences between these cultures and our own in sex-related behavior seem to be culturally determined.†

The compelling logic of this conclusion becomes more obvious when we consider the alternative: if we hypothesize a biological basis for these differences, we ought then to conclude that Tchambuli men are dependent because they have more female hormones. This would be akin to concluding that Latin American men are more *macho* than American men because of higher levels of male hormones, or that Oriental women are less aggressive than American women because they have more female hormones.[*] Since we know there is no such cross-cultural variation in biological or hormonal sex, we must look to the influence of cultural learning to explain these differences.[†]

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*It should be noted, however, that physical strength is almost irrelevant in the modern industrial society. No such society gives its highest rewards of money, power, or prestige on the basis of physical strength.

†However, we still have not adequately explained what the late Professor Michelle Rosaldo referred to as the "striking and surprising fact that male activities are always recognized as predominantly important." Rosaldo noted that, even when women have a great deal of power, male activities are typically regarded as more important. This observation is amply supported by the findings of others. For example, among the African Yoruba, Lloyd reports, women "control a good part of the food supply, accumulate cash, and trade in distant and important markets; yet when approaching their husbands, wives must feign ignorance and obedience, kneeling to serve the men as they sit." Similarly, in the Jewish ghetto communities of Eastern Europe, Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog found that women typically ran the household and the family economy. Women worked to provide family support, had more practical knowledge than their husbands, and made most of the economic decisions for the family; but they nevertheless deferred to their husbands. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, eds., *Woman, Culture, and Society* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), 19–20, citing P. C. Lloyd, "The Yoruba of Nigeria," in James L. Gibbs, ed., *Peoples of Africa* (New York, 1965), and Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, *Life Is with People* (New York, 1955).

The power of cultural factors is further suggested by a very different line of research: the work of John Money and Anke Ehrhardt and of John Hampson and Joan Hampson[3] on hermaphrodites. A hermaphrodite is an individual who possesses a full set of both male and female genitalia and reproductive organs. While a complete hermaphrodite is extremely rare, a fair number of babies are born each year whose sex is difficult to determine with certainty. Some of these infants appear to be female but are biologically male; others appear to be male but are biologically female. Dr. Money and his associates at Johns Hopkins University have spent almost twenty years following the life histories of some of these babies. Of greatest interest to us here are those babies who were assigned one sex at birth but later found to belong biologically (genetically, gonadally, hormonally) to the opposite sex. In virtually all these cases, the sex of assignment (and thus of rearing) proved dominant. Babies designated males at birth and brought up as boys by their parents (who were unaware of their child's true female genetic and hormonal makeup) thereafter thought of themselves as boys, played with boys' toys, enjoyed boys' sports, preferred boys' clothing, developed male sex fantasies, and in due course fell in love with girls. The reverse was true for babies who were biologically male but reared as girls: they followed the typical feminine pattern of development—they preferred marriage over a career, enjoyed domestic and homemaking duties, and saw their future fulfillment in the traditional woman's role.

This research dramatically illustrates the impact of socialization—even when it contradicts biological sex—and thus further supports the importance of learned differences as determinants of sex roles. Let us now examine the process by which sex roles are learned—the process of socialization.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SOCIALIZATION

From the minute a newborn baby girl is wrapped in a pink blanket and her brother in a blue one, the two children are treated differently. The difference starts with the subtle tones of voice adults use in cooing over the two cradles, and it continues with the father's mock wrestling with his baby boy and gentler play with his "fragile" daughter.[4]

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[*] As Sandra Bem and Daryl Bem observed, "If female hormones are responsible for keeping women from high level jobs, we would have to assume that women in the Soviet Union have different hormones, because they comprise 33 percent of the engineers and 75 percent of the doctors." Sandra Bem and Daryl Bem, "Training Woman to Know Her Place: The Power of a Nonconscious Ideology," *Psychology Today*, Nov. 1970.

[†] The cultural learning theory is supported by Beatrice Whiting and Carolyn Pope Edwards's cross-cultural study of sex differences in children three to eleven years old. Whiting and Edwards found that many sex differences in children's behavior can be attributed to socialization pressures in the form of task assignments. For example, girls are more likely to be assigned to care for children under eighteen months, and this contributes to nurturance behavior, i.e., the offering of help and support. However, when boys are similarly required to tend babies, they also score higher on offerings of help and support. Beatrice Whiting and Carolyn Pope Edwards, "A Cross Cultural Analysis of Sex Differences in the Behavior of Children Aged Three through Eleven," *Journal of Social Psychology* 91 (1973): 171–88.

In one study Jeffrey Rubin, Frank Provenzano, and Zella Luria interviewed the mothers and fathers of newborn infants on the day of the child's birth.[5] The fathers were interviewed almost immediately after the delivery, while the mothers, who were often under sedation at the time of delivery, were interviewed up to twenty-four hours later. The fathers were not permitted to handle their babies during the first twenty-four hours but could view them through display windows in the hospital nursery. Most of the mothers, on the other hand, had held and fed their infants. The parents were asked to describe the baby as they would to a close friend or relative. They also rated the baby on an eighteen-item bipolar scale, choosing between adjectives such as *noisy* versus *quiet, active* versus *inactive, strong* versus *weak, cheerful* versus *cranky,* and *easygoing* versus *fussy.*

Both parents described daughters as softer, finer featured, weaker, smaller, prettier, more inattentive, more awkward, and more delicate than sons. Sons were characterized as firmer, larger featured, better coordinated, more alert, stronger, and hardier.[6] Although mothers and fathers generally agreed on the sex-differentiated characteristics, the fathers were stronger sex-typers in that they labeled the two sexes farther apart on the adjective pairs. (However, one measure produced a cross-sex effect: mothers rated sons as cuddlier than daughters while fathers rated daughters as cuddlier than sons, a finding the researchers dubbed the *oedipal effect.*)

The results of this study are impressive in light of the fact that the sample of newborn male and female babies *did not differ* in average length, weight, or Apgar scores (ratings of the heart rate, respiratory effort, muscle tone, reflex irritability, and color of newborns). Thus the differences the parents perceived in the children seem to be a pure case of parental labeling. Rubin, Provenzano, and Luria concluded that "sex-typing and sex-role socialization appear to have already begun their course at the time of the infant's birth, when information about the infant is minimal. . . . [and these labels] may well affect subsequent expectations about the manner in which their infant ought to behave as well as parental behavior itself."[7]

In another innovative study Jerrie Will, Patricia Self, and Nancy Datan observed eleven mothers, who each played, in turn, with a six-month-old child.[8] Six of the women were told the child was a boy; the other five were told it was a girl. The researchers then observed which of three toys—a doll, a train, or a fish—the mothers offered the child. Although each mother claimed she did not distinguish between boys and girls at that age, the women who thought the child was a girl most often offered "her" a doll to play with. The women who thought the child was a boy offered "him" a train. In addition, the mothers who thought the child was a girl commented that "she was a real girl": they said "she was sweeter and cried more softly than a boy would."[9] (In fact, the child was a boy.)

This research vividly illustrates the potential impact of socialization at its earliest stages. It indicates that sex-role socialization may begin before the child is even aware of a sexual identity—before he or she can have an internal motive for conforming to sex-role standards. It also suggests that cultural assumptions about what is "natural" for a boy or for a girl may be so deeply ingrained that parents may treat their children differentially without even being aware of it. Presumably, if we interviewed mothers of six-month-old babies, they would not tell us that they expected their young sons to be independent and assertive while still in the cradle. Yet, it appears that at some level mothers do have such expectations, and these expectations are successfully communicated to very young babies. Thus, wittingly or unwittingly, parents may encourage and reinforce sex-appropriate behavior, and little girls and little boys may respond to parental encouragement and rewards. So little boys may "learn" to be independent, active, and aggressive while their sisters may "learn" to be dependent, verbal, and social.

Until recently, most researchers simply assumed that parents played the dominant role in teaching sex-role stereotypes to their children. With this assumption guiding their research, most psychologists "found" evidence of differential parental behavior toward girls and boys. For example, Howard Moss observed mothers' treatment of their newborn children at three weeks and three months, and he found that the infants were being given consistent reinforcement for sex-appropriate behavior.[10] In fact, Moss tentatively suggested that patterns leading to verbal ability in girls and aggression in boys were being selectively encouraged in the infants he observed.[11]

Along the same lines, Susan Goldberg and Michael Lewis observed thirteen-month-old babies and found that the girls clung to, looked at, and talked to their mothers more often than the boys did.[12] They traced each of these behavioral differences to differential treatment by the mothers when the babies were still younger. The same mothers and their babies had been observed when the babies were six months old. At that stage the researchers had found that mothers of girl babies touched their infants more often than did mothers of infant boys. They also talked to and handled their daughters more often.[13] By the time these same children were thirteen months old, the researchers observed that the girl babies had learned to respond to the more frequent stimuli they received from their mothers: they reciprocated their mothers' attention, with the result that by thirteen months they talked to and touched their mothers more often than the boys did. To establish the causal relationship, i.e., that high frequency of touching at six months causes babies to seek more touching at thirteen months, Goldberg and Lewis reclassified the mothers they had observed at six months into groups with high and low rates of touching. They found that the children (both boys and girls) of mothers with high touching rates at six months sought the most maternal contact at thirteen months.[14]

A decade later two Stanford psychologists, Eleanor Maccoby and Carol Jacklin, tried to replicate the Goldberg and Lewis research but did not find the differences that Goldberg and Lewis had found. In fact, Maccoby and Jacklin observed surprisingly *little differentiation* in parent behavior according to the sex of the child. How can we reconcile these contradictory results from two groups of reputable researchers? Were the east coast parents whom Moss and Goldberg and Lewis had monitored more likely to treat young boys and girls differently (consciously or unconsciously) than the California parents whom Maccoby and Jacklin observed? Or have parents changed their behavior in the past ten years (following the new nonsexist ideology among child-rearing experts)?

To some extent the answers to these questions will have to await the next decade of research. However, it is interesting to note that controversy is not new to this subject. In fact, in an effort to clarify the state of knowledge in this field, Maccoby and Jacklin had themselves undertaken a massive reevaluation of 1,600 studies done between 1966 and 1973. Surprisingly, this comprehensive review of the research literature led them to the conclusion that *most previous research had failed to document* consistent differences in parental treatment of boys and girls.[15]

Although the Maccoby and Jacklin review of the socialization literature is highly regarded, some scholars are reluctant to accept their conclusion that there are no significant differences in parental treatment of boys and girls. Is this just a sex-typed bias in these scholars? I think not. Many of us may believe that parents play a role in sex stereotyping even if we can not measure it in the laboratory. (What do you think? Do you think your parents had different expectations for boys and girls? How would you test your intuition?)

While this is likely to be an area of continuing controversy and research effort over the next decade, one explanation for the Maccoby and Jacklin "no-difference finding" is that the research done to date has not adequately measured the great variety of subtle ways in which parents communicate sex-typed expectations. For example, in a recent observational study, psychologist Esther Greif reported that parents differentially interrupt their sons and their daughters.[16] In fact, parents interrupt girls twice as much as they interrupt boys. Greif also found that fathers interrupt children of both sexes more than mothers do. Since interruptions provide a clear index of relative power and importance, children who are frequently interrupted are subtly being told that their opinions are not worthy of serious attention. This type of communication is often much more effective than parental assertions that they "treat all their children alike."

Thus, one way to reconcile the apparent contradiction in research reports is to assume that more ingenious research measures are needed to tap into the subtle ways that parents communicate to and socialize their children.

A similar line of reasoning was used by the late Berkeley psychologist Jeanne Block, who contended that the published research reviewed by Maccoby and Jacklin relied on samples that tended to obscure sex differences.[17] For example, Block noted, only 9 percent of the studies focused on fathers. Since fathers are more sex-differentiating than mothers, this may have biased the results. Moreover, Block pointed out that 77 percent of the studies cited by Maccoby and Jacklin related to the socialization of children aged five and younger. In some important areas—in achievement, for instance—sex-related differences in socialization are unlikely to occur at that early age. Indeed, in the minority of studies (23 percent) that deal with children over age six, sex-differential parental behaviors appear more frequently.

While Maccoby and Jacklin cannot be faulted for these two biases in the research literature (the focuses on mothers and on young children) Block suggests that, if researchers use other samples in the future, they may come to different conclusions.

Block's own research on parental training, based on seventeen samples in six countries, revealed that sex-differentiation in socialization increased with the age of the child and peaked during the teen years.[18] Both parents were more likely to train their daughters in traditional feminine behavior than in achievement-related skills. Both "emphasized achievement, competition, independence, and taking personal responsibility more for sons than daughters," and both encouraged "ladylike" behavior in females. Block also found that fathers were more concerned with their daughters' affective and social skills. In teaching their daughters, they paid more attention to social factors than to the girls' performance. Other research suggests that girls whose fathers encouraged feminine behavior typically displayed more traditional sex-typed behavior.[19]

Without question, the predisposition of psychologists to concentrate their research on early childhood in general, and on mothers as socializers in particular, has produced some bias in the socialization literature to date. While this article is similarly restricted by the available research literature, I have tried to go beyond it and to examine a broad range of socialization influences.

Early Cognitive Socialization

We have been discussing the first type of socialization an infant experiences: simple behavior reinforcement. A second type of socialization begins with cognitive learning—when the child is able to sort out and make conceptual distinctions about the social world and herself or himself. Around age three or four, the child begins to make sex-role distinctions and express sex-role preferences. Meyer Rabban found that at age three both boys and girls still showed incomplete recognition of sex differences and were unaware of the appropriateness of sex-typed toy objects.[20] Each year, however, children's cognitive abilities increase: by age six they are able to distinguish the male and female roles clearly and to identify themselves appropriately.

Sex-role learning in these preschool years may be divided into three analytic processes. The child learns (1) to *distinguish* between men and women and between boys and girls, and to know what kinds of behavior are characteristic of each; (2) to express appropriate sex-role *preferences* for himself or herself; and (3) to *behave* in accordance with sex-role standards.

In labeling these processes I have avoided the term *identification* because of the distinct meaning of this word in the socialization literature. Identification, a frequently used concept in Freudian theory, assumes that sex-role learning is limited to the same-sex parent. This theory is discussed (and criticized) in the final section of this article. In the next pages, each of these three processes is discussed separately, because each presents a different set of contingencies for the growing boy or girl.

Distinguishing between male and female roles. Both girls and boys learn to distinguish the male from the female role by observing the men and women around them: their parents, sisters and brothers, neighbors, and friends. In addition to serving as models for the young child, these adults and older boys and girls often provide explicit instructions on proper behavior.

There is mounting evidence that fathers are more concerned with sex-typed distinctions than mothers. In interviews with parents of two- to four-year-old children, Evelyn Goodenough found that fathers more strictly differentiated sex roles and encouraged stronger sex typing in their children than did mothers.[21] More recently Judith Langlois and Chris Downs compared the influence that mothers, fathers, and peers had in rewarding and punishing sex-appropriate behavior in three- and five-year-old children.[22] They found that fathers provided the most vigorous and consistent pressure for sex-typed behaviors. In addition, fathers used different techniques with daughters and sons: they rewarded their daughters and gave them positive feedback for appropriate sex-role behavior. With their sons, they used more negative feedback and punished them for sex-inappropriate behavior.

It is interesting that Langlois and Downs found mothers more likely to reinforce behavior of *both* boys and girls with rewards and positive feedback. Peers, in contrast, were more likely to use punishment on both sexes. (Thus, when boys played with girls' toys, other boys interrupted them by hitting them, ridiculing them, etc.) The researchers concluded that the combined pattern of the three socializing agents provided a "finely tuned system" in which fathers, mothers, and peers each make a unique contribution in reinforcing the child's sex-appropriate behavior.[23]

Picture books are another important source of sex-role learning for young children. Through books, children learn about the world outside their immediate environment: they learn what other boys and girls do, say, and feel, and they learn what is expected of children of their age. Picture books are especially important to the preschool child because they are often looked at over and over again at a time when children are in the process of developing their own sex-role identities. In addition, they are read to children before other socialization influences (such as school, teachers, and peers) become important in their lives.

Lenore Weitzman, Deborah Eifler, Elizabeth Hokada, and Catherine Ross in the early 1970s examined the treatment of sex roles in those children's books identified as the "very best": winners of the coveted Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished picture book of the year.[24] Just ten years ago, the sex-role messages in picture books were overwhelming. The most salient fact about females in the Caldecott books was simply that they were invisible. Females were underrepresented in titles, central roles, pictures, and stories. Most of the books were about boys, men, and male animals, and most dealt exclusively with male adventures. The Caldecott winners examined had eleven pictures of males for every one picture of a female.[25]

The female characters who did appear were usually insignificant or inconspicuous. For example:

> There are two women in [the book] *The Fool of the World:* the mother, who packs lunch for her sons and waves goodbye, and the princess whose hand in marriage is the object of the Fool's adventures. The princess is shown only twice . . . . She does not have anything to say

> throughout the adventure, and of course she is not consulted in the choice of her husband; on the last page, however, the narrator assures us that she soon "loved him to distraction." Loving, watching, and helping are among the few activities allowed to women in picture books.[26]

Weitzman et al. found that the girls in the Caldecott books were typically portrayed as passive and doll-like, while the boys were shown as active and adventuresome. Most of the girls engaged in service activities directed toward pleasing and helping their brothers and fathers. The boys, by contrast, engaged in a variety of tasks requiring independence and self-confidence.

Picture books also provide children with images of what they will be like when they grow up. Boys and girls are likely to identify with adults of the same sex and desire to be like them. Thus, adult role models influence a child's aspirations and goals. However, in award-winning picture books Weitzman et al. found the adult women role models to be stereotyped and limited:

> Obadiah's mother cooks, feeds him hot chocolate, and goes to church. The wife of the Sun God carries wood to help him build the house, but she never speaks. Sylvester's mother is shown sweeping, packing a picnic lunch, knitting, and crying. And Mrs. Noah, who had an important role in the biblical story of the flood, is completely omitted from the children's book version.[27]

Even the motherhood role is unrealistically circumscribed:

> The mother is almost always confined to the house, although she is usually too well dressed for housework. Her duties are not portrayed as difficult or challenging—she is shown as a housebound servant who cares for her husband and children. She washes dishes, cooks, vacuums, yells at the children, cleans up, does the laundry, and takes care of babies. For example, a typical domestic scene in *Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* shows the father reading the paper, Sylvester playing with his rock collection, and the mother sweeping the floor.[28]

As Weitzman et al. note, the picture books disregard the more imaginative things that real mothers do.[29]

In all the Caldecott-winning books, only one adult female played an active leadership role—a fairy godmother who was clearly not a "normal" woman but a mythical creature. In contrast, the roles that men played were varied, interesting, and for the most part attainable. They were storekeepers, house builders, storytellers, monks, fighters, fishermen, policemen, soldiers, adventurers, fathers, cooks, preachers, judges, and farmers. They were also the kings and the gods. Not one woman in the Caldecott sample had a job or profession; not one father helped in the mundane duties of child care, dishwashing, cooking, cleaning, or shopping. The authors concluded that, in the world of picture books,

> little girls receive attention and praise for their attractiveness, while boys are admired for their achievements and cleverness. For girls, achievement is marriage and becoming a mother. Most of the women in picture books have status by virtue of their relationships to specific men—they are the wives of the kings, judges, adventurers and explorers, but they themselves are not the rulers, judges, adventurers and explorers.
>
> Through picture books, girls are taught to have low aspirations because there are so few opportunities portrayed as available to them. The world of picture books never tells

> little girls that as women they might find fulfillment outside of their homes or through intellectual pursuits. . . .
>
> In a country with over 40 percent of the women in the labor force it is absurd to find that women in picture books remain only mothers and wives. . . . Their future occupational world is presented as consisting primarily of glamour and service. Women are excluded from the world of sports, politics and science. They can achieve only by being attractive, congenial and serving others.[30]

These studies of picture books were done in the early 1970s, so we might ask whether children's books have become less stereotyped in the past decade. Although we can now point to the availability of many more nonsexist books, they are still rare and expensive compared to the stereotyped old favorites on the supermarket and library shelves. Still, every community is different; it would be interesting to study the popular books in your library or to examine the prize-winning titles of today.

Another much-discussed source of sex-role socialization for young children is television. Jo Ann Gardner's study of the program "Sesame Street" (another supposed ideal) suggests that television contributes equally to severe sex-role stereotypes:

> On one program, Big Bird (having said that he would like to be a member of a family and having been told that Gordon and Susan would be his family) is told that he will have to help with the work and that since he is a boy bird, he will have to do men's work—the heavy work, the "*important*" work and also that he should get a girl (bird) to help Susan with *her* work of arranging flowers, redecorating, etc. There was more and virtually all of it emphasized that there is men's work and then there is women's work—that men's work is outside the home and women's work is in the home. (This in spite of the fact that 17 *million* children under eighteen have mothers who are employed outside the home; of these, 4.5 million are under six.)[31]

More recently Sarah Sternglanz and Lisa Serbin have analyzed the most popular commercially produced children's television programs.[32] Because they wanted to compare the treatment of males and females in these programs, they limited their sample to programs with at least one male and one female character. This restriction meant they had to eliminate half of the programs most widely viewed (according to Nielson ratings). Yet even in this less inclusive group of ten popular programs they found that two-thirds of the characters were male.

Sternglanz and Serbin also observed statistically significant differences in the behaviors of the two sexes. Males were more often portrayed as aggressive and constructive, while females were more likely to be shown as deferential.[33] In addition, males were more likely to be rewarded for their behavior, while females more often received *no reaction*. An exception to this rule was found only when females exhibited high levels of activity; then they were more likely to be *punished*.

As Sternglanz and Serbin note, "there is clear indication that modeling is a powerful technique for influencing children's behavior. Imitative learning appears to occur spontaneously in many situations, and to account for a significant portion of a child's behavioral repertoire."[34] In addition to providing models for sex-appropriate behavior, these programs provide a powerful lesson in negative modeling: a child who identifies with the female characters learns it is sex-inappropriate for girls to be too active or aggressive, and a child who identifies with the male characters learns it is sex-inappropriate for boys to defer to or express admiration for others.[35]

Do you think you would obtain the same results if you studied children's television programs today? Carolyn Arnold reports that students in her sex-roles classes at Cañada Community College in California found continuing stereotypes in the portrayal of females and males in children's programs in the early 1980s.[36]

Although the images in children's books and TV programs appear to be more stereotyped and rigid than reality, interviews with young children indicate the extent to which these clearly differentiated sex roles are internalized by the child. Ruth Hartley asked a sample of young boys what they thought was expected of boys and girls. Her respondents described boys as follows:

> They have to be able to fight in case a bully comes along; they have to be athletic; . . . they must be able to play rough games . . . they need to be smart; they need to be able to take care of themselves; they should know what girls don't know . . . they should have more ability than girls . . . they are expected to get dirty; to mess up the house; to be naughty; to be outside more than girls are; not to be cry babies, not to be softies; and to get into trouble more than girls do.[37]

Girls, according to the boy respondents,

> have to stay close to home; they are expected to play quietly and more gently than boys; they are often afraid; they must not be rough; they have to keep clean; they cry when scared or hurt; their activities consist of "fopperies" like playing with dolls, fussing over babies, and sitting and talking about dresses; they need to know how to cook, sew and take care of children, but spelling and arithmetic are not as important for them as for boys.[38]

When Hartley asked her young male respondents about adults, she found their images of the two sexes even more disparate. In the boys' eyes men are active and intelligent,

> strong, ready to make decisions, protect women and children in emergencies. . . . They must be able to fix things, they must get money to support their families, and have a good business head. Men are the boss in the family and have the authority to dispose of money and they get first choice in the use of the most comfortable chair in the house and the daily paper. . . . They laugh and make more jokes than women do. Compared with mothers, fathers are more fun to be with: they are exciting to have around and they have the best ideas.[39]

In contrast, women are seen as a rather tired and unintelligent group:

> They are indecisive and they are afraid of many things; they make a fuss over things, they get tired a lot . . . they don't know what to do in an emergency, they cannot do dangerous things, they are scared of getting wet or getting an electric shock, they are not very intelligent. . . . Women do things like cooking and washing and sewing because that's all they can do.[40]

Do you think that these rigid sex-role descriptions are relics of past generations? It would be interesting to replicate this study in your local preschool.

Expressing sex-role preferences. Once the child has learned to distinguish males from females and has determined the types of behavior that are appropriate for each, he or she may begin to express sex-role preferences. Rabban found that both girls and boys at age three decidedly prefer the mother role when asked to choose which parent they want to be like.[41] Other studies have corroborated this preference of young children for the mother.* According to the reasons the children themselves give for their preference, they like best the parent who caters to their material wants, who expresses affection for them, who plays with them most, and who punishes them least.[42]

But the sex-role preferences of children soon change. By age five most boys, and a significant minority of girls, say they prefer the masculine role. Daniel Brown, interviewing five- and six-year-old children, found more cross-sex preferences among girls (indicating a desire to be boys) than among boys.[43] In addition, the boys show a significantly stronger preference for the masculine role than girls reveal for the feminine role.[44] The research of Willard Hartup and Elsie Zook corroborates the findings about strength of preference[45] and indicates further that with each year more girls prefer to identify with the masculine role than boys with the feminine role.[46]

One explanation for the general preference for the male role is that both boys and girls have learned that it is more prestigious in our society. Thus, it is preferable. Hartley's study, cited above, clearly indicates that children perceive the superior status and privileges of the masculine role.[47] They know which sex gets the best chair in the house, and which sex is expected to do the cleaning.[48] Brown, using the values children give to sex-typed toys, also concluded that the children saw the masculine role as having greater prestige and value.[49] Smith found evidence that, as children grow older, they increasingly learn to give males more prestige.[50] He asked children from eight to fifteen to vote on whether boys or girls had certain desirable and undesirable traits. With increasing age both boys and girls increasingly ascribed the desirable traits to boys. In addition, boys expressed a progressively better opinion of themselves while self-conceptions of girls progressively weakened.[51]

Thus children learn that it is better to be a male than a female, because it is men who exhibit the highly valued traits and are accorded the privilege and prestige in our society.† No wonder, then, that girls are reluctant to express "appropriate" sex-role preferences and continue wishing they were boys. Boys, by contrast, find it easy to express "appropriate" sex-role preferences.

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*These preferences of young children challenge Freud's theory of penis envy. They suggest, rather, that young boys may experience something akin to breast envy.

†Alice Rossi has suggested that girls get a more subtle message about the relative prestige of men and women. They learn that outside the home men are the bosses of women; however, in the home, father does not know best. The message thus communicated to little girls is that women can be important only in the family. Alice Rossi, "Equality between the Sexes," in Robert J. Lifton, ed., *The Woman in America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), 105.

While it is likely that young girls have experienced a considerable amount of role conflict in learning to express "appropriate" sex-role preferences in the past, this may now be changing. The greater feminist consciousness of the past decade has not only fostered a new sense of pride in women (and girls), it has also started to change the structural conditions in our society that have made it more desirable to be a male in the past. Thus both girls' preferences and the role that is being offered to them may be changing. Just how much these are changing is another interesting question for research.

Learning sex-role behavior. The third component of the socialization process consists of learning to act as a girl or a boy. In the past it was assumed that children started acting in sex-appropriate ways by imitating same-sex models. Simply put, boys imitated their fathers, and girls imitated their mothers. However, in their influential review of the research literature, Maccoby and Jacklin found that laboratory research had *failed* to demonstrate that children were actually more likely to imitate same-sex (rather than opposite-sex) models.[52]

Does this suggest that girls do not imitate their mothers more than their fathers? David Perry and Kay Bussey argue that it does not: they assert that the lab experiments on modeling were artificial in that they exposed children to a single and often unfamiliar model.[53] In the real course of development, Perry and Bussey suggest, children watch the behavior of *many* male and female models, and they observe what behavior each sex performs *frequently*. Children then imitate the people whom they perceive to be good examples of their sex role. Thus they model themselves after their same-sex parents *only if* their parents act like most other women or men the children have observed.[54]

The Perry and Bussey notion that children employ these abstractions of male-appropriate and female-appropriate behavior helps explain why the daughters of women physicians may still insist that "women are not doctors." They know that their mothers are not typical. Perry and Bussey do not assert, however, that children's sex-role behaviors are *not* learned from their parents. Rather they suggest that children learn selectively and may stop imitating parental behavior that is not representative. Similarly, children may drop a particular parentally inspired behavior from their repertoire if they realize that it is not sex-appropriate.

Boys are said to have more difficulty learning appropriate sex-role behavior. Their difficulty stems from three sources: the lack of continuous male role models, the rigidity and harshness of male sex-role demands, and the negative nature of male sex-role proscriptions.

Several theorists have suggested that boys know less about the masculine role because of the relative lack of salience of the father as a model. David Lynn notes that the father is in the home much less than the mother, and, even when he is there, he usually participates in fewer intimate activities with the child than the mother does.[55] Both the amount of time spent with the child and the intimacy and intensity of parental contact are thought to be important for the child's learning. Since the girl is able to observe her mother throughout the day and has continuous and intimate contact with her, she supposedly finds it easier to use her mother as a model and to imitate appropriate sex-role behavior.

Lynn has further theorized that, because boys have less direct exposure to male models, they tend to develop stereotypical images of masculinity.[56] This view has been supported by studies showing that fatherless boys have more exaggerated notions of what constitutes masculinity than do boys who have a father in the home.[57] The tendency of boys to pattern themselves after a male stereotype may help account for the exaggerated forms of masculinity encouraged by male peer groups. In the absence of fuller role models to emulate, boys may view extremes of "toughness" and aggression as appropriate male behavior.

Hartley has suggested that boys have the additional problem of a more rigorous sex-role definition: "Demands that boys conform to social notions of what is manly come much earlier and are enforced with much more vigor than similar attitudes with respect to girls. These demands are frequently enforced harshly, impressing the small boy with the danger of deviating from them, while he does not quite understand what they are."[58] By contrast, very young girls are allowed a wider range of behavior and are punished less severely for deviation, especially in the middle class. (At young ages it is easier for a girl to be a tomboy than for a boy to be a sissy.) Upon reaching adolescence, however, the behavior of girls is more sharply constricted than is boys'.

In addition to the relative absence of male role models and the rigidity of the male sex role, the socialization of boys is said to be characterized by negative proscriptions.[59] Boys are constantly warned *not* to be sissies and *not* to engage in other feminine behavior. The literature on learning suggests that it is harder to learn from punishment than from rewards, because the desired behavior is not enunciated in the sanction and therefore remains obscure.[60] Thus some theorists have asserted that the socialization of boys is particularly conducive to anxiety. In Hartley's words,

> the child is asked to do something which is not clearly defined for him, based on reasons he cannot possibly appreciate, and enforced with threats, punishments, and anger by those who are close to him. . . . Anxiety frequently expresses itself in over-straining to be masculine, in virtual panic at being caught doing anything traditionally defined as feminine, and in hostility toward anything even hinting at "femininity," including females themselves.[61]

In contrast to the anxiety-producing sex-role learning of the boy, the socialization literature characterizes the young girl's experiences as easy. She is supposedly provided with more positive opportunities to learn appropriate role behavior through her frequent interaction with her mother* as well as the chance to try out her feminine role in her doll play.[62]

This idyllic view of the learning process for girls appears naïve to any woman who has been socialized in a middle-class family. It is clear that the sex-role socialization process is equally anxiety-producing for girls, although for somewhat different reasons. The girl is provided with a female model and is afforded more opportunity to "play out" the appropriate behavior, but the role she is asked to play is clearly not a desirable one. As already noted, children understand the relative worth of the two sexes at quite young ages. The little girl is therefore aware of the fact that she is being pushed, albeit gently, into behaviors that are neither considered desirable nor rewarded by the society at large. For example, she is told that it is feminine to play house: to wash dishes, set the table, dress her doll, vacuum the floor, and cook the dinner. In many middle-class homes some of these activities are delegated to paid domestics, and others are performed with obvious distaste. Why, then, should the little girl want to imitate those behaviors? I would hypothesize that the little girl becomes quite anxious about being encouraged to perform a series of behaviors that are held in low esteem and that she experiences considerable internal conflict when she realizes that her mother, a loved model, receives neither recognition nor satisfaction from such activities and yet encourages them in her.

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*This statement presumes a family in which the mother stays at home. Since mothers of preschool children are increasingly likely to be employed, they may not have much more frequent contact with their children than working fathers do.

In addition to perceiving the low evaluation of feminine activities, many young girls find boys' activities intrinsically more enjoyable. For example, boys' toys allow a much broader range of activity as well as more initiative, creativity, and adventure. One study found that the average price of boys' toys was much greater than that of girls' toys for each age group.[63] More girls in William Ward's sample preferred boys' toys than preferred girls' toys.[64] Respondents in Mirra Komarovsky's study expressed a similar interest in boys' toys—chemistry sets, baseball gloves, and electric trains. "One of my biggest disappointments as a child," wrote a girl in Komarovsky's study, "happened one Christmas. I asked for a set of tools . . . only to find a sewing set."[65]

Since most growing children enjoy being active, running and playing outside, getting dirty if necessary, and being allowed to explore their own interests, it is not surprising that many girls prefer activities approved for boys and resent being restricted to being "a sweet little girl." Komarovsky's students reported that they envied the freedom their brothers and other boys were allowed; they resented being constrained to play with "girls' toys" and be sedentary, quiet, and neat in their play.[66]

In reviewing the socialization literature I was struck by the fact that the harsh restrictions placed on boys are often discussed, but those placed on girls are ignored. In fact, there is no reason to believe that the socialization of boys involves greater restrictiveness, control, and protectiveness.[67] Boys may be punished more often, but girls' activities are likely to be more severely constrained to begin with so that they never have a chance to engage in punishable behavior.

It is also possible that the kinds of sanctions used to socialize women may be more subtle, but no less severe: boys are spanked, but girls may be made to feel unworthy, deviant, guilty, or queer.[68] The following quotes from Komarovsky's study indicate the powerful sanctions and the resulting anguish experienced by girls whose desires conflict with the sex-role preferences of their parents:

> I started life as a little tomboy but as I grew older, Mother got worried about my unladylike ways. . . .
>
> When despite her efforts she caught me one day trying to climb a tree in the park she became thoroughly exasperated and called me a little "freak."

> Once I got very dirty playing and Mother told me that if I didn't learn to play quietly and keep myself neat no man would ever want to marry me.[69]

These quotes suggest the very real pressures that are brought to bear on the girl whose temperamental preferences do not conform to the feminine stereotype.*

In summary, the socialization of boys and girls may present different sets of difficulties, but difficulties and anxiety in the socialization process are common to both. Typically, girls have more readily available role models, but they probably have less motivation to imitate those models because they (correctly) view the role as more confining and less rewarding than the masculine role. Boys may have less salient role models and experience more frequent physical punishment, but they have more motivation to learn the masculine role because they (correctly) view it as more highly valued than the feminine, allowing more exciting and interesting activities.

Consequently, socialization must be understood as two very different but equally anxiety-producing processes for boys and girls because it requires them both to conform to rigid sex-role standards that are often in conflict with their individual temperaments or preferences. To the extent that we continue to define appropriate sex-role behavior for men and women as polar opposites, we will continue to push many individuals into unnatural molds.

The Learning Process: Reactions, Rewards, and Punishments

Let us now briefly consider how specific characteristics are encouraged in children of each sex. According to Jerome Kagan, the typical child seeks the acceptance of parents and peers and wants to avoid their rejection. These motives predispose her or him to shun inappropriate activities and to choose responses that are congruent with sex-role standards.[70]

Parents say that they want their daughters to be passive, nurturing, and dependent and their sons to be aggressive and independent. Therefore, most parents directly or indirectly punish aggression in their daughters[71] and passivity and dependence in their sons.[72] For example, the little girl is allowed to cling to her mother's apron, but her brother is told he can't be a "sissy" and must go off on his own. The dependence and affection-seeking responses seen as normal for both boys and girls in early childhood become defined as feminine in older children.[73] The result, as Judith Bardwick et al. have noted, is that girls are not separated from their parents as sources of support and nurturance, and they are therefore not forced to develop internal controls and an independent sense of self.[74] Instead, the self they value is one that emanates from the appraisals of others. Consequently

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*Recent research suggests that today's parents may be more relaxed about tomboy behavior among middle-class girls. One 1982 study of preadolescent tomboys found their parents "unconcerned" about their daughters' atypical sex-typed behavior. On the other hand, the researchers found that by the time these tomboys reached adolescence they had "grown out" of their tomboy behavior (with two exceptions: they remained more active in sports and were less likely to use cosmetics). Richard Green, Katherine Williams, and Marilyn Goodman, "Ninety-nine Tomboys and Non-tomboys: Demographic Similarities and Behavioral Differences," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 11 (1982): 247–66.

girls develop a greater need for the approval of others and a greater fear of rejection[75] than do boys.

Kagan has observed that our definition of femininity *requires* reactions from other people. The young girl cannot assess whether she is attractive, nurturing, or helpful without continual interaction and feedback from others.[76] She is thus forced to be dependent on people and to court their acceptance to obtain the experiences that help to establish sex-typed behaviors.[77]

In contrast, the boy is encouraged to be self-reliant. Many masculine sex-typed behaviors, especially those involving physical skills, can be developed alone. A boy is taught to stand up for himself and engage in certain behavior because he, as a person, feels that it is appropriate. In fact, men who stand by their individual principles despite opposition and the scorn of others often become cultural heroes.

Sociologist Teresa Marciano argues that the other-oriented socialization of girls handicaps them in the world of work.[78] Marciano notes that "the center of gravity" in the socialization of boys is the desire for achievement and self-gratification—they are encouraged to break away and to measure themselves by task-based achievements instead of personal approval. For girls, in contrast, the center of gravity lies in others, because girls receive validation from anticipating and complying with the needs of others. Marciano asserts that this socialization handicaps girls in the world of work because they do not practice competition, assertiveness, and winning; instead of putting their own goals forward, girls are more likely to be concerned with the needs and wishes of others.[79] (While these female characteristics are helpful in some situations, they are also a handicap, because girls are oriented to the approval of others even in situations when independence is called for.)

According to Urie Bronfenbrenner, different methods of child training are used for boys and for girls. Boys are subjected to more *physical* punishment, whereas *psychological* punishments, such as the threat of withdrawal of love, are more frequently used for girls.[80] Children trained with physical punishment have been shown to be more self-reliant and independent.[81] The other method of child training—the love-oriented psychological method—usually produces children who are more obedient and dependent.[82] Since girls are most often trained with psychological methods, they are exposed to more affection and less punishment than boys, but they are also made more anxious about the withdrawal of love.[83]

Thus, both the specific methods of child training and the cultural definition of femininity (which necessitates reliance on the approval of others) encourage dependence in women. Kagan links the crucial significance of others—and their acceptance or rejection—to the finding that girls are often more conforming and more concerned about socially desirable behavior than boys.[84] Another interpretation of female conformity links it to doll play training. David Matza has hypothesized that girls are taught to be more conforming and concerned with socially acceptable behavior because they are trained to act as socializing agents with their dolls. By "training" their dolls to do the right thing, the girls themselves gain a vast amount of experience in articulating and sanctioning the cultural norms.[85]

Some empirical observations. Until recently most psychologists who have written about the process of sex-role learning either have relied solely on their own observations or have applied more general theories of learning to the specific case of sex roles. Thus a major gap in the literature has been the absence of observational evidence to support (or refute or modify) the theories discussed above. However, in recent years Professor Lisa A. Serbin and her colleagues have conducted a series of pioneering observational studies that have begun to yield some evidence to support these theories.

In one study Serbin et al. observed fifteen preschool classrooms to examine teacher responses to boys and girls working and playing in the same setting.[86] More specifically, they coded how the teachers responded to two types of behavior—disruption and dependence—to see if they reinforced these behaviors differentially in boys and girls.

Contrary to what one might assume, earlier research had indicated that teacher attention to disruptive behavior served to *encourage* it rather than to discourage it. For example, O'Leary, Kaufman, Kass, and Drabman found that "teachers' loud reprimands reinforced and maintained disruptive behavior at a high level, while soft reprimands, audible only to the child and his neighbors, effectively decreased disruption."[87] In other studies, "rates of aggressive behavior in preschool children were shown experimentally to decrease when the behavior was ignored by the teacher."[88] Thus Serbin et al. reasoned that, if teachers were more likely to respond to aggression or disruptive behavior in boys, and to do so with loud reprimands, they might be reinforcing such behavior, and "one might expect boys to become and/or remain more disruptive than the girls."[89]

In accord with their hypotheses, Serbin et al. found that the preschool teachers were indeed more likely to respond to disruptive behavior from boys.[90] This difference was clearest with respect to aggression: "The average rate of teacher response to aggression was over three times higher for boys than for girls."[91] The researchers also found that teachers used more loud reprimands when scolding boys.

In response to dependent behaviors, girls got more attention when they stood or played near the teacher. In fact, the researchers found that the girls received a lot of attention from the teacher *only* when they were near the teacher, not when they moved farther away. This suggests that girls stayed close to the teacher to avoid being ignored. There were no similar proximity contingencies for boys: "Boys received a fairly constant rate of teacher attention regardless of their distance from the teacher."[92]

After the observations were completed, the researchers asked the teachers to respond to a questionnaire. The teachers' responses indicated that they "were not aware of responding differentially to boys and girls, or of giving different amounts of positive or instructional attention to either sex."[93]

In trying to interpret their findings Serbin et al. asked why

> teachers respond more frequently and intensively to the aggressive behavior of boys. One possibility is that disruption by boys is . . . more intense or dangerous than the disruptive behavior of girls, and . . . teachers feel a greater necessity to react . . . forcefully. Another

> possibility is that teachers believe boys to be less responsive to reprimand . . . , and habitually give them more "intensive" attention.[94]

The authors concluded that, while either or both possibilities "may represent real sex differences in behavior, the resulting patterns of teacher attention are those which should differentially maintain, or even strengthen, existing levels of disruptive behavior in boys."[95]

It is interesting to note the parallel findings between this research and Serbin's television study. In both settings females are more likely to be ignored, and Serbin hypothesizes that, as a result, they learn to feel ineffectual and unable to influence the world.

Before I end this section, it may be useful to note that there is one sex difference in social behavior that has been consistently documented in the research literature. As psychologist Carol Jacklin observed, "The clearest sex difference in social behavior is in aggression."[96] Boys at all ages are more aggressive* than girls, and men are more aggressive than women.

In one study of naturalistic observations of rough-and-tumble play among preschoolers, Janet Di Pietro found sex differences in the amount and intensity of hitting, pushing, kicking, wrestling, biting, jumping, and other physical assaults.[97] In another study (defining aggression among children as pushing or hitting without smiling) Omark, Omark, and Edelman collected extensive time-sampled observations of children in playgrounds in the United States, Switzerland, and Ethiopia. In all three countries the boys were consistently more aggressive than the girls.[98] Similarly, in experiments with children four and five years of age, Parton and Geshuri noted that boys were more likely than girls to imitate videotaped aggressive responses toward dolls and other toys.[99] In a fourth study, which observed eight- and nine-year-old children, Slaby found that boys were more likely than girls to deliver "punches" to an unseen peer by pressing a button.[100] And in observations of eleven-year-old children, Shortell and Biller found boys more likely than girls to deliver a higher intensity of noise to an unseen peer.[101]

The manifestation of aggression depends somewhat on the age of the subjects. "In nursery age children, aggression is usually very direct and physical, and thus easily measured . . . [A]s children get older, verbal aggression becomes more common, and physical aggression becomes less common.[102] But either way, according to Jacklin, whether verbally or physically, boys are more aggressive than girls.[103]

Similar sex differences are found in dominance behavior, which is closely linked to aggression. As Jacklin notes, "toughness" hierarchies tend to develop in the early grades, so that boys and girls can reliably identify which kids are "tougher" than which others, and these hierarchies are mostly composed of boys.[104] She hypothesizes that these hierarchies may grow out of the different-sized play groups that boys and girls tend to form, for boys are more likely to play in larger groups. In nursery school, for example, among children without prior school experience, boys tend to play in groups of five, on the average, while girls tend to play in groups of two or three. Dominance hierarchies are more likely to develop in larger groups than in dyads or triads.[105]

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*Jacklin defines aggression as the intent to hurt another. Assertion, on the other hand, implies standing up for one's own rights, but without intending to hurt.

Some evidence also suggests sex differences in two types of cognitive skills: verbal abilities and spatial abilities. These abilities are discussed later in the section on intellectual and analytic ability (pp. 187–89).

VARIATION IN SEX-ROLE STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOR

Individual Differences

Thus far we have taken the success of the socialization process for granted and have assumed that most boys and girls eventually adopt the prescribed sex-role behaviors. But most of us can think of exceptions—the self-confident achievement-oriented girl, or the dependent boy who cares very much about others' opinions of him. We all know some people who seem to contradict the stereotypes and others, possibly including ourselves, who conform to only a percentage of them. In fact, we may often feel the pull of the extremes of a single trait within ourselves, wanting to be both independent and dependent at the same time, or feeling that we are at times totally oriented toward achievement and at other times holding back for fear of being too successful.

In an effort to summarize a large body of literature, I have focused on the "average" girl (and boy) and have attempted to describe the "typical" pattern of socialization. As a result, the wide range of variation in individual behavior has been obscured. It is important to pause in this analysis to emphasize the extent of variation among individuals of *both* sexes with regard to personality characteristics, intelligence, and achievement motivation.

The range of differences within each sex is much greater than the differences between the average members of opposite sexes.[106] Whenever we speak of averages, we obscure the great range of variation within each sex. Moreover, after a review of the literature on sex differences, Jo Freeman concluded that what was deemed typical of one sex or the other was based on the average performance of only *two-thirds* of the subjects.[107] But this disregards the behavior of the *remaining one-third* of each sex. Because it is easier to describe the typical socialization pattern first, however, I will continue temporarily to disregard individual differences. In the final major section of this article, The Achievers, I return to the topic of individual behavior variation and examine its implications for socialization theory.

As I describe the typical socialization process, however, keep in mind the limits of all generalizations. While most descriptions may accurately characterize most boys and girls, there will always be an important minority who deviate from the typical pattern. In addition, those who are in the majority and those who are in the minority are always shifting—so that an individual may be typical at one point, or in one type of behavior, but deviant at other times or in other activities.

The Continuing Research Debate

It is important to remember that there is still considerable disagreement about the extent to which sex-linked behavioral differences actually exist. Although the earlier research seemed to confirm the existence of differences,[108] many of these findings are now considered open to question. For example, Maccoby and Jacklin's massive reevaluation of the empirical evidence on sex differences (approximately 1,600 studies, published primarily between 1966 and 1973) concluded that many of the earlier reports of sex differences were unfounded.[109]

Maccoby and Jacklin found the evidence on sex differences in anxiety, level of activity, competitiveness, dominance, compliance, and nurturance to be equivocal. In addition, although they noted fairly solid support for the long-established behavioral differences in verbal ability, spatial ability, and aggressiveness, they did *not* find substantial support for previously reported findings that (1) girls are more "social" than boys, (2) girls are more "suggestible" than boys, (3) girls have lower self-esteem, or (4) girls are less motivated toward achievement.[110]

Given the political and emotional investments in the debate over sex differences in behavior, it is unlikely that any work on this topic will be accepted as definitive in the near future. Thus it is not surprising that, while most scholars have praised the Maccoby and Jacklin effort as the most authoritative analysis in the field, others contend that it is biased in the direction of finding no sex differences. For example, as we noted, their reliance on studies of very young children may have led to an underestimation of sex differences that appear later, particularly in adolescence.[111] However, inasmuch as Maccoby and Jacklin were reviewing all the published research in psychology, one cannot blame them for this bias; it originates in the field itself.

Social Class Variation in Sex Roles

Sex-role standards differ by social class and by racial and ethnic group.[112] Even within these large subgroups, various aspects of family composition affect both the content and the potency of sex-role socialization. Because it is impossible to consider all these factors in each section of this article, I have focused up till now on the most prevalent section of the population, the broadly defined white middle class. This may have given an erroneous impression of uniformity. Thus, it is important now to consider some of the variations in sex-role standards, first by social class and then by race.

A parent's social class position is an important determinant of his or her sex-role standards and expectations. Sociologists have generally used a combination of three indicators to measure social class—education, occupation, and income. However, the research on sex-role socialization has been consistent no matter what indicator of class is used. All the studies have found that persons in the *higher* social classes tend to be *less rigid* about sex distinctions. In working-class and lower-class families, there is much more concern about different roles for boys and girls and men and women. As Letha Scanzoni and John Scanzoni have pointed out, the theme song of the popular television program "All in the Family" accurately portrays the concern of a working-class father (Archie Bunker) for clear-cut distinctions between the sexes (for the days "when girls were girls and men were men").[113]

As might be expected from these parental expectations, differentiation between boys and girls appears to be sharpest in lower-class families.[114] Meyer Rabban found that children from working-class families differentiate sex roles at earlier ages and have more traditional sex-role standards than middle-class children.[115] He showed that working-class boys were aware of the appropriate sex-typed toy choices by age four or five; middle-class boys were not aware of them until age six.[116] The class differences are even greater for girls. Middle-class girls not only showed later awareness of sex typing than working-class girls but also were less traditional in their sex-role concepts.[117]

Middle-class parents may encourage traditional feminine behavior in their daughters, but they also encourage a degree of independence and assertiveness. Not only are middle-class parents willing to tolerate daughters who are tomboys, but also many of them encourage their daughters to do well in sports and to excel in school. Lower-class parents are more likely to view such interests and achievements as "too masculine" and to discourage them.

A similar pattern emerges in the class-related sex-role expectations for boys. Middle-class parents are willing to let their sons be more expressive (to be more nurturant and tender), while working-class parents see these traits as too feminine or sissy.[118] Working-class parents want their sons to be instrumental, that is, to be focused on tasks and work.

In summary, then, middle-class parents are interested in seeing both their sons and their daughters develop a greater range of traits along *both* instrumental and expressive lines. In contrast, blue-collar parents encourage traditional sex-role behavior in both boys and girls. These differences are illustrated by Lillian Rubin's comparative interviews with lower- and middle-class families. As Rubin notes, in the homes of the professional middle class, both boys and girls

> have more training in exploring the socio-emotional realm. . . . It's true that for the girls, this usually is the *focus* of their lives, while for the boys, it is not. Nevertheless, compared to child-rearing patterns in working-class families, professional middle-class families make fewer and less rigid sex role distinctions in early childhood. . . .
>
> As small children, therefore, boys in such middle-class homes more often get the message that it's all right to cry, to be nurturant as well as nurtured, to be reflective and introspective, even at times to be passive—in essence, in some small measure, to relate to their expressive side.
>
> Not once in a professional middle-class home did I see a young boy shake his father's hand in a well-taught "manly" gesture as he bid him good night. Not once did I hear a middle-class parent scornfully—or even sympathetically—call a crying boy a sissy or in any way reprimand him for his tears. Yet, these were not uncommon observations in the working-class homes I visited. Indeed, I was impressed with the fact that, even as young as six or seven, the working-class boys seemed more emotionally controlled—more like miniature men—than those in the middle-class families.[119]

In later sections we will trace the ways in which these class differences affect scholastic achievements and the choice of marriage and/or career.

Ethnic Variation in Sex Roles

Further specification of sex-role standards occurs along ethnic and racial lines. Many people have the impression that Italians, Jews, Asian-Americans, Chicanos, Irish-Americans, Polish-Americans, Blacks, and Puerto Ricans have distinctive conceptions of appropriate behavior for men and women.[120] With few exceptions, however, ethnic variations in sex-role standards have been ignored in the socialization literature.[121]

One fascinating study, conducted by Fred Strodbeck, compared the socialization practices of Italian and Jewish mothers in encouraging achievement motivation in their sons.[122] When asked about their aspirations for their sons' achievements, both Italian and Jewish mothers had equally high standards and hopes for their performance. However, when asked how they would respond to their sons' hypothetical failure to meet their high standards, the Italian mothers indicated they would nevertheless love and accept the sons. The Jewish mothers, in contrast, reported they would show displeasure if their sons failed to meet their standards, and moreover they would make their love and acceptance contingent upon the sons' continued striving and eventual success. Strodbeck concluded that the Jewish mothers' "contingent love" was far more powerful in creating high achievement motivation in boys.

Unfortunately, most of the research on achievement motivation and ethnic differences in socialization, like Strodbeck's focuses exclusively on male samples. As psychologist Matina Horner has noted, most social scientists investigating achievement motivation did not consider women's achievement important enough to investigate.[123] Further, those few who originally included women in their samples later dropped the female respondents from their analysis when they found the females' responses did not conform to the male pattern.

Racial variation in sex roles: The case of black women. When one first approaches the question of sex roles among black women one cannot help but be puzzled by two seemingly contradictory findings. Some researchers report that black women have adopted a more masculine sex role than white women and are strong, assertive, and independent. Other studies show that black women's self-images are even more sex-stereotyped than those of white women. In this section I will briefly review the research in support of each of these views and then try to make some sense of the apparent contradictions.[124] However, it is important to note that sex-role research on blacks remains one of the biggest "blind spots in existing sociology."[125] Clearly, more systematic research in this area is sorely needed.

The sociologists who assert that black women are strong, independent, and dominant trace these attributes to their role in the family and the economy. They point to the legacy of slavery for the roots of the black family structure and to black women's historically greater access to occupational opportunities, money, and status.

The black family has frequently been characterized as a matriarchal (mother-headed) extended family with an emphasis on consanguine relationships (blood ties) rather than on conjugal (husband–wife) relationships.[126] Although sociologists, such as Denise Kandel[127] and Daniel Moynihan,[128] have found that there are more female-headed families among blacks even when the studies control for socioeconomic status, the matriarchal family structure is typically a lower-class family pattern.

This lower-class pattern begins, according to Carol Stack, with premarital pregnancy.[129] Since premarital sex is prevalent, and parenthood is highly valued (regardless of the child's legitimacy), young women often become pregnant in their teens.[130] However, youth and lack of monetary resources often prevent them from marrying and establishing a separate domicile, so that many are unmarried and living in their parents' homes when their first child is born. Thereafter, these unmarried women quickly and accurately assess the relative stability of welfare, as opposed to the extreme economic vulnerability of their male partners, and commonly forgo legal marriage, at least temporarily.[131]

Since these unmarried mothers often stay at home, their mothers are likely to play a great role in raising the grandchild. Even married adult children often continue to reside with one or more of their parents, and, if a marriage fails, both men and women readily return to their mothers' households. Thus the "matriarch" is both the head of the household and the dominant authority figure in many black families. She also provides a strong female role model.

Stack attributes the lack of permanent husband–wife households to two primary factors. The first is the lack of permanent well-paying jobs for men.[132] The second is the disincentives built into the welfare system.[133] As a result, many researchers report that black women, in contrast to white women, "hold more negative attitudes toward the reliability of men and the security and desirability of marriage."[134] They realize that they cannot rely on men for their support and they socialize their daughters to have the same realistic skepticism. For example, Joyce Ladner found that very young black girls originally want to marry a man who is a protector, supporter, and companion. However, with increasing age they come to believe that very few men can fulfill these roles, and they become more ambivalent in their expectations. (Some girls had firmly established the view that men are "no good" by the time they were eight years old.)[135]

Having learned that they cannot count on men or marriage for their future security, black girls realize that they will have to rely on themselves. As a student of mine wrote in an autobiographical socialization paper, "Black girls don't dream of being rescued by 'Prince Charming.' They know that 'Snow White' is White, and that if they want to get something or somewhere, they are going to have to get it themselves."[136] Thus black girls are socialized to become self-sufficient and to rely on their own achievements.

As Ladner notes, the realities of life in the ghetto, where aggressiveness and toughness are requisites for survival, make the ideal of a dependent, passive, middle-class housewife almost unimaginable.[137] The black girl is given responsibility for herself (and sometimes for the home and her younger siblings as well) from an early age and is expected to learn to "fend for herself."

At the same time that the black girl is learning the importance of becoming self-sufficient, her observations of her mother's work role (and her mother's attitude toward work) provide a practical guide toward this end. Because a significant proportion of black women have always worked in the paid labor force, both they and their daughters are more likely to regard work as a normal part of the female role.[138] In fact, employed black women are more likely to hold professional positions than are employed black men, and Cynthia Epstein has shown that the "double negative" status of being both a woman and a black may actually help a black woman to gain access to the professions that both white women and black men have found difficult to penetrate.[139]

Thus, in contrast to the traditional sex-stereotyped view of work and careers as "masculine" pursuits, in the black community they are seen as natural and acceptable female roles. Work brings money, security, and status—all of which are highly valued by both men and women.

Because black women are more likely to regard work as part of the "normal" female role, they are more likely to encourage and support their daughters' educational and occupational aspirations. Thus, Kandel found that black mothers in female-headed families had higher educational aspirations for their daughters than for their sons.[140]

There are also data to suggest that the daughters absorb their mothers' aspirations. Ladner found that young black girls most frequently identify with and aspire to be a "strong black woman"—resourceful, hardworking, and economically independent.[141] The teenage girls she interviewed saw this ideal woman as the one who kept the home intact—by caring for the children, carrying out household tasks, and often supporting the family financially. Another popular aspiration was to acquire the skills that would allow the girl to escape from the ghetto and become an educated and upwardly mobile middle-class woman.[142]

To summarize the first position, there is considerable evidence to support the assertion that young black girls are socialized to become independent, self-reliant, and self-sufficient "strong women." In fact, Ladner has shown that black girls are encouraged to be more independent than white girls, irrespective of social class.[143]

Other research, however, suggests that black women are socialized to accept a traditional female role. For example, Patricia Gurin and Carolyn Gaylord, writing in 1976, found that sex-role influences inhibit career and educational aspirations for black women in approximately the same ways as for white women, and that black and white college women alike continue to be interested in the same traditionally "feminine fields."[144] For example, women of both races are less likely to aspire to a career in business or engineering. Gurin and Gaylord conclude that their "results agree with those of earlier studies which indicate that women students of both races tend to have lower aspirations than their male counterparts."[145]

Marjorie Hershey also reports that black college women subscribe to the same sex-stereotyped identities as white college women.[146] She found that the primary difference in sex-role attitudes among college students is between men and women, not between blacks and whites. Both black and white college women described themselves as tender, gentle, sensitive, and compassionate.* Similarly, both black and white college males described themselves as assertive, having leadership abilities, and having a strong personality. In fact, Hershey found that black men scored higher on masculinity than white men, indicating

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*In addition, she found that black women were significantly more stereotyped than white women in their sex-role *attitudes*, although they scored higher than white women on the masculine dimension of the sex-role *identity* scale.

their "affinity for more traditional patriarchal sex role norms."[147] Thus Hershey concluded that, since both black women and black men subscribe to traditional sex-role attitudes, sex is much more important than race in determining sex-role identities.

How can we reconcile these seemingly contradictory findings? One explanation lies in the social class differences in the research samples. It is possible that lower-class black girls are socialized to be strong and independent but middle-class blacks are not. We know that the mother-headed family, a major source of the strong, self-reliant female role, is much more common among the lower classes. This may explain why Stack and Ladner, who studied lower-class girls, found them to be self-sufficient and strong. However, Hershey, and Gurin and Gaylord, who focused on (mostly middle-class) black college women, found more traditional aspirations and attitudes.*

A second explanation lies in the difference between idealized roles and actual behavior. It is possible that Hershey, and Gurin and Gaylord, using questionnaires (which often elicit socially desirable responses), elicited female "ideals," while Stack and Ladner, who conducted lengthy interviews with their respondents in the field, captured more of their actual behavior. As Hershey herself notes, attitudes and self-ratings may not be congruent with behavior.[148] In fact, she suggests that women who take on traditionally masculine tasks may still identify with the ideal-typical female role, and that some would prefer a more sex-stereotyped life if they had the option.[149]

A third way of resolving these findings is to recognize that they are not contradictory at all—each may reflect a different aspect of the black woman's multidimensional sex role. Thus black women may be more independent, more self-reliant, and more work-oriented than white women, but, at the same time, they may be as sensitive, nurturant, compassionate, and "feminine." The findings are contradictory only if we assume that "masculinity" and "femininity" are unidimensional.

Women, and black women in particular, may have some traditionally masculine traits such as independence and self-sufficiency, *and* some traditionally feminine characteristics, such as warmth and nurturance. For example, in his study of sex roles in the black community, John Scanzoni found that he had to consider several different role dimensions—each of which varied independently. He found that blacks were more traditional with respect to approved behavior for men and women, but were less traditional with respect to women's individualism.[150] In addition, black women were both more nurturant and more task competent, more autonomous, and more powerful in the family. These findings, like those reviewed above, indicate that "masculine" and "feminine" attributes cannot be viewed as polar opposites.

Similarly, Sandra Bem has shown that individuals can score high on both masculinity and femininity, low on both, or some combination of the two.[151]

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*If black women from lower-class families are being socialized into less traditional sex roles than those from middle-class families, then social class has an opposite effect in black and white families: while white lower-class families are more sex-stereotyped than white middle-class families, black lower-class families may be *less* sex-stereotyped than black middle-class families.

Further, a lot of sex-role behavior is likely to be *situationally specific*—that is, it is likely to depend on the social context. For example, a woman attorney may be assertive with clients, aggressive in court, tender with her husband, and nurturant with her children. In fact, since sex-role attitudes and behaviors are likely to be much more situationally specific than the research literature seems to acknowledge, it is surprising that there have not been *more* seemingly contradictory findings—for both blacks and whites.

Family Constellation and Sex Roles

In addition to class and race, another important variable in sex-role behavior is the family constellation—the number, spacing, and sex ratio of the children in the family. Orville Brim has pointed out the importance of siblings in sex-role definitions, finding that children with cross-sex siblings exhibited more traits of the opposite sex than did those with same-sex siblings.[152] This effect was particularly strong when opposite-sex siblings were older. Thus, boys with older sisters and girls with older brothers are more likely to exhibit the traits of the opposite sex.

Another significant aspect of family constellation is the number and presence of adults. Many sociologists have assumed that children who grow up without a father or a mother must be inadequately socialized. However, recent research has indicated that father absence does not affect lower-class boys' occupational achievement, although it may have a depressant effect for middle- and upper-class boys.

On the other hand, the single-parent mother-headed family may be a spur to occupational achievement in girls. Janet Hunt and Larry Hunt found that girls in father-absent families are freed from the ideal-typical female socialization.[153] These families establish a new type of female role model, blurring the traditional distinction between male and female roles and the instrumental–expressive division of labor by sex, because mothers are performing both roles and both types of tasks. Thus, father absence, in conjunction with modifications of the mother role, may remove some of the conventional barriers to female occupational aspirations and achievement. When girls are not socialized into sharply differentiated sex roles, they may be freed from the traditional restraints on female achievement.

THE SCHOOL YEARS

Although boys and girls learn sex roles early, the definition of appropriate sex-role behavior changes with age. The female sex role at age five is specific to the attributes of a five-year-old and different from the female sex role at age twenty-five.[154] Sex-role socialization continues throughout the child's life as she or he learns age-specific sex-role behavior.

Thus far I have focused largely on socialization within the family. As the child matures and begins to participate in social relations outside the family, teachers, peers, and other socializing agents become more significant in defining and sanctioning appropriate sex-role behavior.

The Influence of the School

Once the child enters school, her or his experiences there assume great importance. The educational system has generally reinforced sex-role stereotypes. For example, in a 1960 study of all third grade readers published since 1930, Irwin Child, Elmer Potter, and Estelle Levine found girls and women shown as timid, inactive, unambitious, and uncreative.[155] Females were not only the moral inferiors of males in these books (they are shown to be lazy twice as often as males) but their intellectual inferiors as well: "Males . . . are . . . portrayed as the bearers of knowledge and wisdom, and as the persons through whom knowledge can come to the child."[156]

More recent examinations of elementary school readers indicate that the most widely used textbooks retain the same stereotypes.[157] Nor are these stereotypes restricted to readers. Lenore Weitzman and Diane Rizzo found that spelling, mathematics, science, and social studies textbooks purvey an equally limited image of women.[158] Rarely are women mentioned in important roles in history, as government leaders, or as great scientists. This study found the stereotyping to be most extreme in the science textbooks, where only 6 percent of the pictures included adult women. Weitzman and Rizzo hypothesized that the presentation of science as a prototypical masculine endeavor may help to explain how young girls are "cooled out" of science and channeled into more traditionally feminine fields.[159]

Educational achievement tests reflect a similar masculine bias. In a study of the achievement tests from each of the major publishing companies, psychologist Carol Kehr Tittle found "a substantial bias" both in the number of male and female noun and pronoun references and in the stereotyped portrayals of males and females in the content of the test items.[160] The test items much more frequently referred to males and the male world. In addition, a content analysis of each of the tests revealed sex-role stereotypes in the questions: "Father helps Betty and Tom build a playhouse; when it's completed, 'Betty sets out dishes on the table, while Tom carries in the chairs . . .'."[161]

The adult roles in the test items were equally stereotyped. Most of the biographies were about men. All the professors, doctors, and presidents of companies were listed as male, while practically all teachers were listed as female. If a team was mentioned, it usually had all male members. In addition, as Tittle observes, some questions implied that the majority of professions are closed to women. For example, "a reading comprehension passage about the characteristics and qualifications required for the Presidency began with the statement: 'In the United States, voters do not directly choose the man they wish to be President.' It repeatedly says 'he must be,' 'he must have. . . .' "[162]

Most schools have had a sex-stereotyped tracking system in which girls are channeled into the more "feminine" subjects (English and social studies in academic high schools; typing, bookkeeping, and home economics in vocational schools) while boys are encouraged to take shop and the hard sciences. Tracking systems not only channel the two sexes into different vocations but also keep both boys and girls from learning skills useful in later life. Thus girls who have been excluded from shop remain blissfully unable to fix things around the home, and boys excluded from home economics remain blissfully ignorant of cooking and other domestic skills.

The magnitude of the skewed sorting of students into "sex-appropriate" vocational tracks is reflected in 1972 nationwide data reported by Saario et al.:

> Ninety-five percent of all students registered in vocational agriculture courses are male; 93 percent of all students registered in consumer and homemaking courses are female; 85 percent of those enrolled in home economics courses which lead to gainful employment are female; 92 percent of those registered in technical courses—metallurgy, engineering, oceanography, police science—are male; 75 percent in office occupations are female; and 89 percent of all registered in trade and industrial courses are male.[163]

After these data were collected, Title IX (of the Education Amendments Act of 1972) was passed. It prohibited all forms of sex-biased discrimination in educational institutions. With the new law in force, it was assumed that these patterns would change. What has been the impact of Title IX over the past decade? Despite the initial optimism of the early 1970s, it is now clear that there has been *little* progress in changing the rules and policies that perpetrate the unequal treatment of males and females in the nation's public schools. For example, a 1983 investigation of New York City's vocational schools, undertaken for the U.S. Department of Education, revealed instance after instance of officials simply ignoring directives to reduce sex discrimination.[164] The survey found that eleven of New York's twenty-one vocational schools had 95 percent or more single-sex enrollment. Some of the examples of continued discrimination are indicative:

> Student recruitment tactics . . . perpetuated bias by directing girls to some schools and boys to others. . . . Teacher hiring practices . . . perpetuated the basic problem by assigning males to predominantly male schools and females to predominantly female schools. . . . At Automotive High School, which graduated its first female student in 1979, . . . teachers and administrators . . . said that female students had not enrolled there because they did not want to get their hands dirty. . . . At Aviation High School, there is one restroom for girls and six for boys. At Mabel Dean Bacon Vocational High School, which teaches cosmetology, business education, dental assistance, and health careers, there is no restroom for boys and only one at the school's annex nearby.
>
> The study also cited examples of sexual harassment against the female students, in the form of coarse language and sexual comments from their male counterparts and animosity from some of the shop teachers. One teacher, the review said, complained that girls "just take the place that could be filled by another boy."[165]

If enforcement was lacking during the late 1970s, when Title IX was supported by presidential policies, results in the Reagan era, when women's equity is not a priority, appear even more discouraging.

One of the major changes that occurred in the 1970s, partially as a result of Title IX directives (and many hard fought court battles), was the phenomenal growth of girls' participation in athletic programs and team sports. In the past, girls were routinely excluded from most rigorous sports and school athletic teams. They were the cheerleaders for the male football and basketball players. As recently as 1971, boys' participation in high school sports was twelve times that of girls.[166] In the past decade athletic programs on both the high school and the college level were opened to women, and there has been a tremendous increase in the number of women's teams. Today the critical issue is one of differential financial support for the two sexes. Women's sports and women's teams typically have inferior facilities, equipment, and uniforms, lower paid coaches, less access to desirable practice fields and hours, less money for athletic scholarships, and, in general, fewer perquisites than their male counterparts. Thus at the same time that we note the phenomenal change in the extent to which school sports have been open to women, we must also note the persistence of the old pattern of differential reinforcement for males and females. As long as women are not given the same level of support as their male counterparts, we continue to socialize them to treat themselves as less serious athletes.

The Influence of Teachers

Guidance counselors and teachers can either help to reinforce conformity to the traditional female role or present exciting new role models to impressionable young girls. In the past they have mostly done the former.

Until recently we have known very little about what actually happened in the classroom. However, in recent years a number of observational studies have been undertaken to examine the role of the teacher in creating or reinforcing sex-role stereotypes. Earlier in this article, I discussed studies by Serbin et al. of preschool classes and the fact that girls' proximal behavior (i.e., staying close to the teacher) and boys' disruptive behavior were reinforced by teacher attention.[167] In a similar observational study of teachers' behavior in elementary school classes (among sixth grade children), Meyer and Thompson found that boys receive much more disapproval and behavioral criticism from their teachers.[168] These teacher responses, according to the Serbin et al. theory, selectively reinforce disruptive behavior in boys.

In another set of pioneering observational studies, Professor Carol Dweck and her colleagues Bush, Davidson, Nelson, and Enna set out to examine how girls acquire "learned helplessness."[169] Learned helplessness exists when children reduce their effort because they assume that failure is insurmountable. Children perceive failure as insurmountable when they attribute it to stable, uncontrollable factors, such as lack of ability.[170] Children who exhibit learned helplessness typically react to a failure by giving up or by deteriorated performance. In contrast, children who believe they can overcome failure tend to view it as a result of unstable, controllable factors, such as effort. After a failure experience, these children often show heightened persistence and improved performance.

Girls are more likely than boys to exhibit learned helplessness. They are likely to blame a poor performance on their own lack of ability, while boys are likely to emphasize motivational factors (and to say they did not try hard enough).[171] Even when girls are proficient at a task, they are more likely to assume that failure reflects lack of ability and to do less well subsequently at the task. Boys at the same level of ability are more likely to assume that the failure was "a mistake," to try harder, and to improve their performance subsequently.

In order to understand why boys ignore the feedback of a failure experience, Dweck et al. hypothesized that "frequent and widespread use of negative evaluation for boys negates the failure feedback they receive from adults as valid indicators of their ability."[172] Because they receive so much negative feedback, boys come to view it as either irrelevant to their performance or a result of their lack of motivation.[173] In contrast, these researchers hypothesized that "the more sparing and discriminating use of negatives for girls makes negative evaluation particularly informative about their level of ability."[174] They further hypothesized that "frequent use of feedback for nonintellectual behavior (conduct and nonintellectual aspects of work such as neatness) should increase the ambiguity of that feedback and impair its meaning as an evaluation of the intellectual quality of the child's work."[175]

These hypotheses were generally supported. As the researchers report:

> First, on positive feedback, more than 90 percent of all the positive feedback that boys received was addressed specifically to the intellectual quality of their performance; for girls, less than 80 percent referred to the intellectual quality of their work.
>
> Second, on negative feedback, the discrepancy was more marked. Less than one third of the boys' negative evaluation was contingent on intellectual aspects of their work, whereas more than two thirds of girls' was directly related to the quality of their performance.
>
> Third, when only the work-related feedback was examined, differences in evaluative feedback for the two sexes were again apparent. . . . For boys, over 90 percent of the praise they received for their work was praise for intellectual competence; whereas for girls, significantly less of their praise (80.9 percent) was directed at the intellectual aspects [of their work]. In other words, almost 20 percent of positive evaluation girls received for their work referred to intellectually irrelevant aspects, such as neatness.
>
> Fourth, for negative work-related evaluations, the sex differences were more pronounced. For boys, only 54.4 percent of the work-related criticism referred to intellectual inadequacy; the remaining criticism was for failure to obey the rules of form. In contrast, 88.9 percent of work-related criticism to girls was specifically addressed to intellectual performance; little criticism pertained to violations of rules of form.[176]

Clearly, the fourth finding is extremely important, for if 45 percent of the negative evaluation boys received for their work indicated only that they did not follow the rules of form, it is easy to see how boys can view negative feedback as irrelevant to the intellectual quality of their performance. The authors conclude that their studies "demonstrate that the pattern of evaluative feedback given to boys and girls in the classroom can result directly in girls' greater tendency to view failure feedback as indicative of their level of ability."[177]

Intellectual and Analytic Ability

Girls consistently do better than boys in reading, mathematics, and speaking until they reach high school, but at that point their performance in school and on ability tests begins to drop.[178] Although we have every reason to believe that girls' intellectual achievements do decline during high school, it should be noted that the typical measures of intelligence and scholastic achievement at this age have a strong male bias. G. A. Milton found that, when adolescent or adult subjects were presented with problems involving primarily mathematical or geometric reasoning, the males consistently obtained higher scores than females.[179] However, if the problem—involving identical logical steps and computations—dealt with "feminine content" such as cooking and gardening materials, the women scored much better than if the problem dealt with guns, money, or geometric designs.[180] This research suggests that girls may believe that the ability to solve problems involving geometry, physics, or logic is a uniquely masculine skill, and their motivation even to attack such problems may be low—for unusual excellence in solving them may be equated with loss of femininity.[181]

Since the erroneous finding that women are less analytic than men is often quoted, it deserves some attention here. It has been postulated that analytic thinking is developed by early independence training: how soon a child is encouraged to assume initiative, to take responsibility for herself or himself, and to solve problems alone rather than to rely on others for help or direction.[182] Each of these characteristics is encouraged in boys and discouraged in girls, as we have already reviewed. When women are socialized to be dependent and passive, they are supposedly being trained to be more "field-dependent" or "contextual" and less analytic in their thinking.

In a devastating review of the scientific literature on what is usually called analytic ability, Julia Sherman pointed out that the term *analytic ability* is misleading.[183] It implies a general intellectual skill, whereas what is apparently being measured in most of the studies is the much more limited ability of spatial perception—the ability to visualize objects out of their context.[184] Boys are generally "field-independent" in their spatial perception, whereas girls are more "contextual." Girls score lower on tests of spatial relationships, but in verbal perception—certainly an area that is equally, if not more, important in analytic thinking—they score higher than boys.[185]

It seems ironic that researchers have labeled spatial perception *analytic ability*. One might speculate that, if women had higher scores on spatial perception and men had higher scores on verbal perception, the latter would have been called analytic ability—for what the researchers have done is to seize upon one of the few traits in which males score higher and to label it analytic ability.

Actually, spatial ability has little to do with analytic thinking in any of the usual meanings of that term.[186] Strictly analytic ability has to do with the structure of arguments, the logical closure of propositions and syllogisms, and patterns of logic. Since World War I (in the work of Whitehead and Russell), and certainly by the 1930s with Wittgenstein's work in modern logic, we generally understand that the underlying structure of logic (and thus of mathematics as well) is ultimately a language pattern, resting on our understanding of linguistic connections. One might therefore argue that people who excel at language and show the most facility in language analysis and construction would potentially have the greatest ability in analytic thinking—in the perception of logical connections and in the understanding of the strength or weakness of arguments.[187] However, this would lead us to conclude that women have superior analytic ability, and the strong antifemale bias pervading the literature on intelligence and analytic thinking precludes this logical conclusion.

It is interesting to note that spatial ability appears to be learned, and is especially strong in individuals who have hobbies or jobs of a mechanical or technical nature. Since the sex disparity in skills related to this ability widens greatly at age seventeen, it is tempting to connect the superior performance of males with the training they receive in high school classes in mechanical drawing, analytic geometry, and shop (as well as with their spare-time activities).

Elizabeth Fennema and Julia Sherman in fact found that sex difference in spatial visualization disappeared once they controlled for the number of space-related courses a student had taken.[188] They conclude that whatever sex differences do exist in spatial ability are most likely explained by factors such as sex-segregated tracking systems and the encouragement of mathematical and mechanical skills in boys.[189] Thus, if both spatial and verbal ability can be learned, findings of sex differences in these areas should direct us once again to the socialization process.

The Influence of Parents

It is not the school alone that channels girls and boys in different directions and emphasizes certain skills over others. Parents also have different sex-related expectations. Although we have questioned the influence of parents in reinforcing sex-role stereotyping in other spheres, when it comes to educational and occupational aspirations, the research over several decades is consistent in showing that parents (or at least fathers) have different expectations for their daughters and their sons. For example, in a small early study in 1952, David Aberle and Kasper Naegele reported that middle-class fathers showed concern over their sons' lack of aggressiveness, good school performance, responsibility, and initiative. In contrast, their concerns for their daughters focused on "their daughters being nice, sweet, pretty, affectionate, and well liked."[190] Half of the fathers rejected the possibility of a future career for their daughters. The other half said it was possible, but they preferred and expected their daughters to marry. Only two of the twenty fathers said they wanted their daughters to know how to earn a living.[191]

Along the same lines, in 1968 William Sewell and Vimal Shah found that parents continued to encourage the educational aspirations of sons more than daughters.[192] Similarly, most of David Bordua's male adolescents reported that their parents "stress college a lot," whereas most of the females reported that their parents "don't care one way or the other."[193] Glen Elder suggested that parents put a differential stress on college for boys, and that the *financial support* that has typically accompanied their concern may have had more of an effect in determining the college plans of adolescents than the students' own intentions.[194]

Since the parents of the 1950s and 1960s were obviously influenced by the limited opportunities they perceived for women in "the real world," one might ask what happened in the 1970s and 1980s when that opportunity structure began to change. Because most of the college students today grew up in this later era, it would be interesting to explore these issues with the parents of the students in your class. How would you describe your parents' aspirations and support for your education and future career?

In the winter of 1983, I asked the students in my class at Stanford University, an admittedly nonrepresentative sample, about their perceptions of their parents' attitudes while these students were in high school. Both female and male students reported considerable support for both a college education and a professional career. The following quotes from women are representative:

> For my parents, and especially my father, the *necessity* of a college education and a career for their daughter was unquestioned. Marriage, while still desirable, was an event that would take place later in life.
>
> My mother has been telling me that I should prepare for a career for as long as I can remember. "Even if you don't *need* to work, you should have something you can fall back on."
>
> My Dad has been very supportive of my plans for law school and is now upset because I want to wait a year before I begin. At this point I feel that he is more anxious about my career than I am.
>
> My father places a great deal of emphasis on excellence in school and wants me to do well. His fear is not that this will make me unattractive to men but that I will become involved with some man and will then care less about my career—i.e., that a man will make achievement less attractive to me. As a result, he has always stressed the importance of focusing on *my* plans and *my* goals and not letting anyone else interfere with my pursuit of them.

These quotes suggest that the climate of parental expectations may well have shifted, at least in some circles, and that women may be getting active parental support for high educational and occupational goals. This is not to suggest, however, that all Stanford women—or all college women—are receiving unqualified support from their parents. While this was the most common response among my students, a significant minority reported a more laissez-faire attitude ("It's up to you, dear—I will be happy with whatever you do") and/or some disagreement between their parents, with at least one parent encouraging a more traditional role:

> I feel like I am constantly caught between my parents: my father wants me to go to law school and to keep up my grades. But my mom wants me to have a good time at Stanford and to meet a nice guy.

Parental pressures to follow a traditional female role are probably greater on the working-class than on the middle-class girl.[195] The working-class girl who aspires to a professional career is seen as especially threatening because her occupational aspirations (if achieved) would make her more successful than her father and brothers, in addition to being "unfeminine."

In contrast to lower-class white girls, lower-class black girls may have their educational and occupational aspirations actively supported by their families.[196] There is no difference in aspirations for boys and girls in intact black families, as there is in white families, and we have already noted Kandel's finding that black mothers in single-parent families had higher educational aspirations for their daughters than for their sons.[197]

Thus far our discussion has suggested that parents of today seem to be more supportive of their daughters' educational and occupational achievements. This does not necessarily mean, however, that they view them as equally important with those of their sons. It is certainly possible to want one's daughter to aim high and to do as well as possible—but nevertheless to feel that her achievement is not as vital as her brother's. Thus parents may still convey different sets of expectations to their daughters and sons even though they say that they want and expect them both "to go to college," or "to have a professional career," or "to do well."

We all know that even the same words can have different meanings—and it is the subtle meanings that may suggest different standards of achievement to daughters and sons. For example, even if they send their daughters and sons to the same schools, and praise them both for high grades, parents may indicate that their sons' achievement is critical while their daughters' is icing on the cake. As one of my students wrote:

> Though my parents have always been proud of my grades and all the honors I've won, I think they would still say I was terrific if I had been fifth or twenty-fifth in the class instead of valedictorian. On the other hand, when my brother won a fellowship, or better yet when he got into medical school, you could tell that was really important to them.

In this context it is important to recall Fred Strodbeck's research comparing the socialization practices of Italian and Jewish mothers (discussed earlier, in the section on Ethnic Variation in Sex Roles). Strodbeck found that the contingent love of the Jewish mothers was far more powerful in creating achievement motivation than the unconditional love and acceptance offered by the Italian mothers. If parents are more likely to use the "Italian" pattern with their daughters—to offer them love and support (and tell them they are terrific) whether or not they excel—they are less likely to instill in the daughters high achievement motivation.

Furthermore, if parents have different implicit standards for their daughters and their sons, they may unconsciously reinforce different personality traits and different behavior in their children. For example, it would be easy for a parent to differentially encourage exploration and independence in a son while trying to "help" and "protect" a daughter. As Komarovsky noted, boys have traditionally been allowed more freedom to play away from home, to return home later, and to choose their own activities.[198] One of her students complained:

> My brother is 15, three years younger than I am. When he goes out after supper, mother calls out, "Where are you going, Jimmy?" "Oh, out." Could I get away with that? Not on your life. I would have to tell them in detail where to, with whom, and if I am half an hour late, mother sits on the edge of the living room sofa watching the door.[199]

Komarovsky concluded that when girls are held back they fail to develop independence, inner resources, and self-assertion.[200] Thus parents may continue to impede their daughters' growth in subtle ways (that may not yet be captured by current research), even though they say that they want and expect them to achieve.

The Influence of Peers

In the 1950s and 1960s high school peer groups commonly equated intellectual success with a loss of femininity. According to Kenneth Keniston and Ellen Keniston, high school girls were made to feel that they had to hide their intelligence if they wanted to be popular with boys:

> Girls . . . learn that "popularity"—that peculiar American ecstasy from which all other goods flow—accrues to her who hides any intelligence she may have, flatters the often precarious maleness of adolescent boys, and devotes herself to activities that can in no way challenge their sex. The popular girls in high schools are seldom the brilliant girls; or if they are, it is only because they are so brilliant they can hide their brilliance from less brilliant boys. . . . Most American public schools (like many private schools) make a girl with passionate intellectual interests feel a strong sense of her own inadequacy as a woman, feel guilty about these "masculine" outlooks, perhaps even wonder about her own normality.[201]

While these norms may still be dominant in some American high schools, and may still govern some subgroups in other high schools, it is clear that there is much more variation today. In some high schools, being a computer whiz or a budding scientist is just as highly rewarded for girls as it is for boys. In addition, the new feminist consciousness of (at least some) teachers and guidance counselors has led many more of them to encourage these interests in girls and to support their scholastic achievements. Thus the high school girl of today may be as likely to have college-bound peers who are more concerned with the pros and cons of a career as a poverty lawyer than with the pros and cons of designer jeans. In fact, some high school women consciously or unconsciously put their romantic lives on hold and form peer groups that focus exclusively on academic achievements.

In the early 1960s, in contrast, James Pierce found high achievement motivation for high school women related to success in marriage, not, as for men, to academic success.[202] In Pierce's view, girls felt that to achieve in life they needed to excel in nonacademic ways, i.e., being attractive in person and dress, finding a desirable social status, and marrying the right man.[203]

The mass media of the 1960s reinforced this perception and provided explicit instruction on attaining these goals. *Seventeen, Glamour,* and *Mademoiselle* provided endless pages of fashion, makeup, and dating advice to help a girl learn to attract, talk to, kiss, and keep or get rid of a boy (depending on the circumstances), and to use clothes, cosmetics, and interpersonal skills to accomplish this all-important end. "On the whole, mass media and popular fiction [continued] to portray career women as mannish, loose, or both; and the happy ending for working girls . . . [involved] abandoning work, marrying, and having many children—and there the story [ended]."[204]

Until the early 1970s one could summarize the three clear lessons that a well-socialized American girl had learned. One concerned her personality, the second her capability, and the third her future role. With regard to her personality, she had learned to be nurturing, cooperative, sweet, expressive, not too intelligent, and fairly passive. With regard to her capability, she had learned she would always be less capable and less important than most men. With regard to her future, she had learned she would be a wife and mother, and, if she were successful, she would acquire that status soon.

Has all this changed? Are the young women of today given clear-cut support for further education and individual achievement from their parents, peers, and the society at large? Is the adolescent girl of today taught to rely on herself rather than on a man? Is she now encouraged to think about "making it" in the business or professional world instead of becoming a wife and a mother? While there are no uniform answers to these questions for *all* women, it is evident that the simple formula of the 1950s and 1960s is no longer appropriate for many. Today, as we shall see in more detail in the next section, the message has become much more complex, especially for the middle-class college girl.

The "Terminal Year" of School

The end of high school is a critical juncture at which the lives of girls from lower- and middle-class families diverge. While many middle-class girls will go on to college, the last year in high school is what Sheila Tobias calls "the terminal year"[205] for many lower-class girls—their last year in school and their last chance "to find a husband." As Lillian Rubin's interviews with working-class girls reveal, for most of them "getting married was—and probably still is—the singularly most acceptable way out of an oppressive family situation and into a respected social status—the only way to move from girl to woman. Indeed, among working-class girls, being grown up means being married."[206]

Rubin accurately portrays the difference between the perspectives of working-class women and those from middle-class families:

> Among the [working-class] women, a few recall girlhood dreams of being a model or an actress, but most remember wanting only to marry and live happily ever after. . . . It's not that the girls from middle-class homes dreamed such different dreams. But along with the marriage fantasy, there was for them some sense of striving for their own development. Even if that were related to enhancing marriage prospects (that is, with a college education a girl can make a "better match"), some aspiration related to self existed alongside it. And, in fact, for those middle-class women, marriage came much later since it was (typically) deferred until after college.[207]

As Rubin notes, the terminal year for most middle-class girls doesn't come until the end of college (and for an increasing number it doesn't come until the end of graduate school or law school—or until one makes partner or tenure). Similarly, the terminal year for many working-class women today may be delayed until they get settled in a job, or earn enough to buy a car, or finish a word-processing course. But whenever it comes, it brings the same pressures to marry and settle down—to find a husband, to buy a home, to have children—and to fulfill one's role as "a woman."

SOCIALIZATION PRESSURES IN COLLEGE

For a long time it seemed odd that young women who had staunchly resisted the pressures to put social life and popularity above intellectual and vocational achievement during high school, suddenly changed during college. They switched their majors from chemistry to art history and decided they were not really interested in graduate school after all. What happened?

It now seems clear that what had distinguished these college women from their working-class sisters was not a stronger commitment to intellectual pursuits, or to feminism, or to a nontraditional life-style, but the fact that they did not face the "terminal year" pressures until the end of college. For them the end of high school was just one more transition point. As long as they continued in school, they were permitted a moratorium on the pressures of "real life." But when these middle-class girls found themselves in their terminal year of college, and thus in the same structural position as their lower-class sisters at the end of high school, their behavior changed.

In the following discussion I shall describe the pressures on college women as if college were the terminal school for all middle-class women. However, women who go into professional or graduate school gain additional moratorium years. For them the terminal year may come at the end of law school or medical school, at the end of an internship or residency or clerkship, or, even further down the career path, when they make partner or get tenure. But whenever they see themselves as completing their "training" the moratorium ends, and that brings the pressures that come with the terminal year of school.

Peer Influences in College

It is now over thirty years since Mirra Komarovsky completed her classic study of sex-role socialization of Barnard College women.[208] At that time (1946), college women reported that they felt caught between the traditional female role and the more modern role—and were constantly pressured by mutually exclusive expectations. For example:

> Uncle John telephones every Sunday morning. His first question is: "Did you go out last night?" He would think me a grind if I were to stay home Saturday night to finish a term paper. My father expects me to get an "A" in every subject and is disappointed by a "B." He says I have plenty of time for social life. Mother says, "That 'A' in Philosophy is very nice, dear, but please don't become so deep that no man will be good enough for you."[209]

Are women in college today being subjected to the same pressures? Do parents or peers still see marriage as the ultimate goal? Are current definitions of appropriate female roles more supportive of independent achievement for women?

One indication of the changes that have occurred over just the past decade comes from my classes at the University of California and Stanford University between 1972 and 1983. I first asked the students in my 1972 undergraduate course on the family (at the University of California at Davis) about the extent to which they perceived "traditional" versus "feminist" pressures from peers. We decided to try a "field experiment" that consisted of the following procedure. Each of the students was to select a person of the opposite sex and sustain interaction with that person for at least one hour. During that hour, the student was to "act in accord with the ideals and goals of the women's liberation movement." (This experiment followed a class unit on the women's movement.) The choice of "feminist behavior" was left up to the individual student. The same procedure was repeated four years later, in 1976, with another undergraduate class on the family. Only the responses of the women students are reported here. (Both classes had predominantly female enrollments.)

Among the female students who completed the 1972 experiment, 27 percent reported a rejection of the feminist behavior by their male companion. In some cases these women were asked to change their behavior: "So after I told him why I was doing it, he said, 'Stop it, please, I don't want you to be a member of women's liberation.' " In other cases, the man treated the woman's ideas or actions as nonserious, tossing them off as a joke or "putting her down as crazy":

> I told him I thought being a housewife and a mother was a bore and a lot of shitwork. Well, this really got to him and he said I was crazy. . . . Just then his roommate came in and he related my "weird" ideas to him and they both had a good laugh.
>
> He said that any woman who had decided that she didn't want children was crazy.

In several instances, the friends and boyfriends were so angered or upset by the women's behavior that they refused to deal with it. They tried to terminate the interaction by telling the women they would never attract a man if they continued to act in such an unfeminine manner:

> He told me that if I wanted a man I should start acting like a woman, because any man would ball me but if I wanted a husband I'd better do the right things.

In contrast to these emotional reactions, some of the men were more intellectual about their rejection, trying to answer the feminist arguments "rationally" by arguing that motherhood was fulfilling or that a woman's career was too disruptive to a marriage:

> He said that if I went to law school I'd be challenging him at his own career and would be sacrificing our home life for a materialistic job. . . . He felt women with careers neglected their husbands and children and that they were basically selfish. . . . When I confessed that I was doing a class assignment he seemed relieved but later continued to discuss the disadvantages of a career for a woman.

The second most common reaction (17 percent) was that boyfriends or dates were merely surprised and uncomfortable:

> All of this made him feel uncomfortable, especially when I said this other guy had a good ass.

The third most common response, reported by 12 percent of the students, was subtle resistance by dates and male friends. Although not explicitly challenging the women, the men attempted to regain control of the situation:

> He asked if he could drive instead, because he didn't like it to look as if he was being chauffeured around.
>
> I was sitting on the chair so he came over and handed me the broom, asking me to hold it, but really trying to put me into my proper role.

Most of these men denied trying to regain the dominant position in the relationship, contending that they were "just trying to be helpful."

> *He asked how much the dinner cost and told me how* much to leave for the tip.

Some of the women (8 percent) reported that their dates or boyfriends did not seem to resent their behavior, but other friends and observers did:

> The waiter seemed to feel sympathy for my boyfriend for being with such an assertive, pushy woman, while the cashier sided with me, assuming that by paying my share, I was being taken advantage of. She said sympathetically, "I've got one at home just like him."

In contrast to the reactions just described, some 10 percent of the women reported that the males they chose reacted positively to their behavior:

> He said he admired intelligent women who he could really talk to. . . .
>
> He said, "I'd rather have someone who would dig building a cabinet with me instead of worrying about ironing my shirts."

It is interesting to note that 27 percent of the women in the class found they could not carry out the assignment because feminist behavior was so normal for them that none of their friends noticed any difference in their conversation or actions:

> Since this is the way I always act, no one reacted to anything I did.
>
> I rarely come into contact with people (especially men) who aren't in a liberated circle of people, and when I do, they don't have much to say.

If we combine this 27 percent of the students with the 10 percent who received positive reactions and the 8 percent who were hassled only by outsiders, we find that for almost half of the women in the first experiment group, there was positive peer support for rejecting the traditional feminine role. Thus, although a majority of these women university students were still being constrained by male peers to conform to more traditional standards of feminine behavior, change was also evident.

When I read the results of this study to the class in 1972, several students who had reported that they had received support for their actions said that this support had definite limits. Many had chosen low-risk situations for the class assignment—situations in which neither the man nor the woman had a great stake in the relationship and the woman's behavior was not of critical importance. Both these women and those who had characterized themselves as "already liberated" felt that when they were *seriously* involved with a man there were more pressures on them to assume a more "feminine" role.

Other research on college women similarly suggests that the pressures for more traditional roles may grow more severe when the woman becomes involved with a particular man. Matina Horner's interviews with Radcliffe students show that boyfriends exert great pressure on them to "return" to traditional feminine roles in their junior and senior years, and it is at this time that their intellectual performance usually drops.[210] As one woman in my class reported:

> I get a lot of support from both men and women, but most men say something like "even though I'm really supportive of what you are, I just can't handle it. . . . I'm still hung up on having a more feminine woman who will support *me*."

Thus, although peers may appreciate the independence and intellectual companionship of the liberated woman, they may let her know that they do not consider her "a real woman."

When I repeated this experiment with my undergraduate family class in 1976, both they and I were astonished by how much had changed. The majority of the class reported not only that they were unable to carry out the assignment (because their behavior now seemed "normal") but also that they had difficulty even trying to provoke a reaction. Some attributed the lack of peer reaction to an increased tolerance for "doing one's own thing." Others, however, felt that a radical change in attitudes had resulted in genuine widespread support for the "new woman."

By 1983 my students were reporting an even more radical shift in their peer culture: it was now assumed that they would all have careers. Although it is difficult to assess the extent to which the students in my class (on the family and the law) at Stanford University were representative of the female students of their generation, it is clear that they perceived very strong support for their occupational aspirations. In response to a series of questions, these female students reported that an "unquestioned" assumption about their future lives was that they would have a career. They had not, however, abandoned their more traditional aspirations—to marry and to have children—and they expressed concern about having to be "Superwoman" to do it all. As one student wrote:

> The pressures on women in college today are very complex. Most of us are career-oriented, yet still committed to the idea of marriage and raising children. A sort of "Superwoman" ideal emerges. We need to be the woman who can do *everything*—and do it well. Most of us have not given a great deal of thought to the logistics of how we will balance everything. But we assume that we *will* be able to do it!

These students feel career pressure from their parents as well as from their peers. As one explained:

> My parents no longer see marriage as the ultimate goal. Instead they realize that their daughter will be supporting herself in the same arena as men. As a result, my intelligence is viewed as helpful to my success. In fact, when I begin to question my own ambitions, it is often my parents who vehemently argue for high aspirations and urge me to go to graduate school or to get an M.B.A. so I can have a position in a prestigious field.

Instead of thinking they should hide their intelligence, these young women feel most comfortable with men who appreciate and respect their intellectual capabilities:

> I realize that my intelligence threatens a lot of men, but I have never felt any pressure to hide it. Back in high school a boyfriend broke off our relationship because I was too smart and too ambitious, but even then I felt it was *his* problem, not mine. That incident made me realize that men who couldn't handle my intelligence were not the ones that I was interested in having relationships with, and the men who found it attractive were much more likely to be enlightened in other ways too. In a way, my intelligence is a filter, it scares off the men that I wouldn't have liked anyway.

If anything, one perceives a shift in the pressure exerted on these women. Instead of marriage being the be-all and end-all, they are now constrained not to let anything get in the way of their careers. As one student wrote:

> When I first came to Stanford from Louisiana I was amazed at the difference in people's expectations for what a woman ought to do. My friends at home went to college to have a good time, assuming that they would find a husband and get married after graduation. At Stanford, the expectation is just the opposite. *Nothing is supposed to come between you and your career, your achievements.* I feel pressure to put off marriage and kids (or just not to have them) and focus on a lifetime career. Yet my friends at home are happy with their jobs selling real estate or working in clothing stores. They "know" they'll only be working until they get pregnant or can afford to stop. Sometimes I think how much easier things are for them because they know what they're going to do, while at Stanford I not only feel pressured from outside to achieve but also feel pressured from within to marry and have kids.

While this quote exemplifies the pressures created by expectations of high achievement for college women, it also has two important messages. First, it suggests that we should not be too quick to assume that the "climate of expectations" has changed throughout the United States. There is still a great deal of variation among colleges and universities as well as within schools. Even at a school such as Stanford, where the dominant norm is high achievement for both women and men, there are still subcultures in which partying, playing tennis, "getting by" in school, dating the right guy, getting away to ski or sail for the weekend, staying in good physical shape, looking attractive, enjoying life, and finding the right husband comprise a woman's major aims in college.

The second message is that the new woman is not without some ambivalence about the unquestioned pressure to achieve. In the pages that follow, I further explore the structural sources of that ambivalence and its consequences.

Intellectual Achievement: The Climate of Nonexpectation?

College should present an opportunity for women to broaden their intellectual horizons and to acquire both the background and the motivation for occupational success. But in the past women have received less encouragement than men. Women professors have been underrepresented on the faculties of all colleges and universities in the United States, even in fields that were sex-stereotyped as female (such as English or art history), and women received no more than a passing mention in the intellectual content of most courses.

The predominantly male faculty typically assumed that women came to college to find husbands and become well-rounded individuals. Few professors took women's intellectual or occupational aspirations seriously.* As Paula Bunting, the former president of Radcliffe College, observed, in her day the college environment for even the brightest women was one of "nonexpectations." Instead of stimulating the bright young woman's intellectual and political ambitions, college worked as a depressant. Thus, many college women came to believe they were less intelligent (or less brilliant or less creative) than their male peers. English professor Florence Howe describes the internalized inferiority among the women in her creative writing seminar in the 1960s:

> What I learned from listening to my women students was that they consistently considered women writers (and hence themselves) inferior to men. . . . Why should naturally inferior writers attempt anything ambitious? . . . Their comments ranged from "I don't have any ideas" to "I can't write anything really interesting" to "I used to have ideas and imagination but I don't any more."[211]

Although the climate of nonexpectations did not make all women doubt their own capacity, it inevitably had a depressant effect on their ambitions. Even those who began college with high aspirations found their expectations for themselves lowered by the time they were ready to graduate: perhaps they should apply for an M.A. program instead of trying for a Ph.D., or perhaps they should take a year off and decide what they "really" wanted to do.

Even those who did well in school, and who therefore had the external validation of high grades, began to question whether they were "truly" as capable or as committed as their male peers. Of course, those women who got high grades had rarely received the kind of professional encouragement that was lavished on their male peers—a fact that could not have easily escaped their attention. Perhaps some of those male professors had really wanted to encourage their bright women students but feared that their interest might be misinterpreted (by their colleagues or their wives, if not by their students). Others may have been concerned about dissuading women from what they thought was the woman's preferred life pattern, for it was widely assumed that women had to choose between a career and marriage.

In light of these expectations it is not surprising that women college students in the past have always been less likely to graduate from college than men, or that women college graduates have less often gone on to obtain advanced degrees.[212]

It is widely believed that the climate of expectations is quite different today. Is this perception accurate? On the one hand, we can point to the growth of women's studies courses and programs and the impressive statistical gains in the percentage of women students: their sheer numbers must have had an impact on the educational climate. In the years 1968 to 1980, the college enrollments of

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*As psychologists Huston-Stein and Higgins-Trenk observe: "In the college years, individual encouragement by one or two faculty members is often an important impetus to high aspirations for women. At college graduation, career-committed women had more often worked with a professor in their field on independent study projects and more often felt that their professors considered them outstanding students. . . . [S]trong encouragement by one or two faculty members can be a critical determinant of the decision to pursue advanced professional status." Aletha Huston-Stein and Ann Higgins-Trenk, "Development of Females from Childhood through Adulthood: Careers and Feminine Role Orientations," in Paul B. Baltes, ed., *Life-Span Development and Behavior* (New York: Academic Press, 1978), 283.

women doubled, from 3 million to 6 million, while male enrollments increased by only one third, from 4.5 to 5.9 million. In 1979, for the first time in the history of United States education, there were more women enrolled in college than men.[213] In addition, more women than ever are graduating from college and going on to obtain higher degrees. In 1980, women earned 47 percent of all B.A.s and 49 percent of all M.A.s, compared to 35 percent of all B.A.s and 32 percent of all M.A.s in 1960.[214]

Women are also increasingly competing with men to gain entry into the high-prestige occupations that were traditionally closed to them.[215] The proportion of women enrolling in professional schools in law, medicine, engineering, and business has risen steadily since 1960. In medical schools women grew from 6 percent of the total enrollment in 1960, to 13 percent in 1972, to 26 percent in 1980. In law schools women increased from 4 percent of the total enrollment in 1960, to 12 percent in 1972, to 34 percent in 1980.[216] While women remain a small minority of the students in graduate programs in engineering, here too there has been a vast increase. In 1960, less than 1 percent (0.004) of the students were women.[217] By 1980, women comprised 9 percent of the graduate engineering students.[218] What is even more impressive, by 1980 women were 30 percent of the students in master's of business administration programs.[219]

Another indication of progress is the number of women awarded doctoral degrees. More women are now enrolled in graduate schools than ever before, and more of them are being awarded Ph.D.s. In 1970, 13 percent of all Ph.D.s were awarded to women. (The proportion had been higher before—in 1920 and 1930, 15 percent of all Ph.D.s were awarded to women, but the proportion had dropped to 10 percent by 1950.) By 1980, women's doctorates had increased to 30 percent of Ph.D.s awarded.[220]

On the other hand, these statistics still reflect a difference in the climate of expectations for male and female students. As long as women constitute far less than 50 percent of the Ph.D. candidates and less than 50 percent of the students in medical, law, business, and engineering schools, it means college women still are not choosing and pursuing careers in the high-level professions *to the same extent* as their male peers.

College women today are believed to be much more career-oriented than the women who were in college in the 1960s and 1970s. While it is clear that most college women now assume they will be employed in the future, it is not clear whether they are thinking of "jobs" rather than "careers." Sociologist Alice Rossi pinpointed the distinction between a job orientation and a career orientation as a critical difference between college men and women in the past.[221] She noted that, even though college-educated women might study and prepare for a future occupation, they viewed these occupations as "jobs," not as lifelong vocational commitments. Their middle-class brothers, in contrast, were clearly future-oriented, preparing and planning for lifelong careers. (Of course the women's lack of preparation for a lifelong career did not prevent them from working. It did, however, prevent them from organizing their lives for a career instead of a job.)

Elizabeth Douvan suggested that unmarried college women in the 1960s held their identities in abeyance, lest premature identity formation reduce their marriage prospects or inhibit their ability to adapt to marriage.[222] It is possible that college women also held back from making lifelong career plans because they expected their careers to be heavily influenced by their future husbands and their family life. If this is so, then the recent upsurge in college women who plan to combine marriage and work may not signify a fundamental change in women's career orientation. Thus if a woman's work is still contingent upon her marriage, or her husband, or her childbearing plans, she may still be adhering to women's traditional priorities.

Are the college women of the 1980s holding their personal and professional identities in abeyance? Are their career plans contingent upon husband, marriage, and children? Although I must continue to caution that Stanford women may not be representative, many of them report that they are doing the exact opposite of what the women in the 1960s did. Instead of putting their career plans on hold, they are putting their marriage and childbearing plans on hold and giving top priority to their careers. As one student wrote:

> The women's situation in America has been changing so fast that fewer obstacles stand in our path to occupational success. Most of us have been actively encouraged to pursue a career and that's our first priority. Even though something inside tells us that real women also have husbands and happy families, the pressures are all in the direction of putting your career first. It's not that marriage and children do not matter; they do. But we have our whole lives ahead of us and lots of things to do first. . . . Personally I want to spend the next few years as . . . [a professional athlete] and then go to law school. Once I'm established I'll worry about having kids. But right now I see the whole marriage trip as a ticket to a personal disaster.

To what extent is this quote representative? Are most college women putting career ahead of marriage? Although I have not been able to locate any data on this precise question, there is a good deal of evidence to suggest that college women today simply assume that they can have both. Thus the question of choosing or setting priorities may not be a salient one.

The percentage of college women who say that they plan to combine marriage and career has grown steadily since the 1960s. For example, in 1964, Patricia Cross asked college freshmen what they would like to be doing in fifteen years. Two-thirds said they would like to be a housewife and mother. By 1970, the proportion had dropped to less than one-third, while the proportion who said they wanted to be a married career woman had doubled.[223] By the mid-1970s, Laurie Davidson Cummings and Ann Parelius found that almost all students at two women's colleges said they would like to combine the goals of marriage, family, and a career.[224]

In 1983 I asked a series of questions along the same lines of the women in my Stanford class on the Family and the Law. Of the female students 95 percent said they expected to marry and 100 percent expected to have a career. Only slightly less, 84 percent, expected to have children. (Surprisingly, very few, only 7 percent, thought that they would get divorced.) One student described the unquestioned assumption that she would combine marriage, parenthood, and a career as a new imperative: "There really is a stigma attached to saying that you do not want to have a career—that you want to be taken care of. You're supposed to be strong and independent—not a parasite."

It is interesting to note the students' perceptions of parental support for this position as well. I asked the following question of Stanford students (in a course on Great Issues in American Society) in the spring of 1983: "Assume you decided to get married after graduation and to give up your plans for a career and/or graduate school. What would be your mother's and father's reaction?" With regard to their mothers, 75 percent of the women said their mothers would be upset and would urge them to pursue a career. Only 15 percent predicted that their mothers would react positively (what she thinks is best for me), and only 10 percent thought they would be neutral (my mom would be supportive of whatever I do). Even stronger reactions were predicted from fathers: close to 90 percent of the women said their fathers would be very upset and would pressure them to change their plans.

Although the word *career* may not refer to the lifelong commitment Rossi delineated, it is clear that the new ideal for college women has become a life of both marriage and work. In addition, this appears to be the preferred life-style for half of the adult women in the United States and for three-quarters of the women under thirty.[225]

Despite this widespread acceptance, it is useful to explore two ways in which the college woman's traditional socialization may create barriers to her occupational advancement. The first is the psychological fear that if a woman is too achieving or too successful she will not be regarded as feminine and will be rejected by men. The second is the cultural imperative that career women must still "prove" their femininity by being good mothers and wives and by not exceeding their husbands' status and achievements.

Fear of Success

Matina Horner's famous experiment on fear of success was conducted in 1965.[226] Horner argued that, for women, the desire to achieve is often contaminated by "the motive to avoid success" or the fear that success will have negative consequences.[227] This fear arises because women equate success with masculine achievement and therefore with a loss of femininity.[228] They worry that they will be less feminine if they strive for success, and this anticipated consequence sets up a conflict that prevents them from achieving. Horner labeled this conflict "fear of success."[229]

In her first experiment Horner asked ninety female undergraduates to write a story when presented with the verbal cue, "After first-term finals, Anne finds herself at the top of her medical school class." Eighty-eight men were asked to respond to the same sentence, with the name John substituted for the name Anne. While the men were comfortable with John's success and saw a flourishing career and happy life ahead for him, the women associated Anne's success with social rejection. They predicted that she would be unpopular, unmarried, and lonely. The women's stories also portrayed Anne as unfeminine. They predicted that she would have doubts about both her femininity and her normality and finally would feel guilty and despairing for having achieved too much.

Horner concluded that most college women, consciously or unconsciously, equated intellectual achievement with loss of femininity. In testing and other achievement situations they were caught in a double bind, worried not only about failure but also about success.[230] "Thus women who were otherwise motivated to achieve, experienced anxiety in anticipation of success and this may have adversely affected their performance and levels of aspiration."[231]

In a second experiment Horner compared the students' performances on tests when they worked alone and when they worked in a competitive group. She found that "a large number of men did far better when in competition than when they worked alone."[232] Women who were rated low on fear of success behaved like the men. However, those women who showed high fear of success (77 percent) did better on a comparable task when they worked alone than when they worked in competition with others, and their performance deteriorated most noticeably in competition with men. Horner concluded that anxiety about success blocks achievement for many bright women.

As Tavris and Offir tell the story, "When Horner published her work, a chorus of 'Aha's!' went up throughout the land."

> Researchers thought they now understood why women had been ruining their studies. College women had a reason for their uncertain career plans. Journalists announced that an explanation had been found for women's low status in the world of work; the fault lay not in the stars but in women themselves. They might want to achieve, but they also wanted to be feminine, and the two motives were as incompatible as oil and water.[233]

Horner's research has since been widely replicated in a series of studies both in this country and elsewhere.* These studies show a remarkable range of results. For example, after a review of the recent literature, David Tresemer reported that, in 45 experiments that used women subjects, the proportion of women who wrote fear-of-success themes varied from 11 percent to 88 percent, with a median of 47 percent.[234] Tresemer also noted that recent experiments reveal that college men, too, fear success. Among men, however, the fear relates to doubts about the value of conventional career goals. Men wonder whether hard work really pays off, in either college or career. (John may drop out of medical school to write a novel, or may hate being a doctor and wonder what it was all for, or may think "It's great for his parents, but he doesn't give a shit."[235]) Anne worries about becoming unpopular and dateless, but John worries about prematurely dropping dead.[236]

One recent interpretation of fear of success views it as a reflection of social reality rather than a deep-seated fear of achievement. John Condry and Sharon Dyer suggest the analogy of asking people to write a story about an interracial couple who have just been married and are about to set up housekeeping in rural Georgia. Here, it would obviously be wrong to label every story that mentions

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*For a good review of the literature, see Martha Mednick, Sandra Tangri, and Lois Hoffman, eds., *Women and Achievement* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975); John Condry and Sharon Dyer, "Fear of Success: Attribution of Cause to the Victim," *Journal of Social Issues* 32, no. 3 (summer 1976): 63–83; and David Tresemer, "Fear of Success: Popular, But Unproven," *Psychology Today* 7 (Mar. 1974): 82–85.

negative consequences as fear of interracial marriage. "The people who predicted bad things for the couple would not necessarily be afraid or bigoted; they might just know which way the racist wind blows."[237] Thus, the stories about Anne and John may not reflect individual motives as much as they reflect "realistic assessments of the consequences of conforming or not conforming to social convention."[238]

Other critiques of Horner's studies question whether fear-of-success motives affect actual performance. As Tresemer points out, the women in Horner's group who were most likely to show fear of success were honors students. "If the people who show fear of success imagery are the ones who get good grades," he says, "just how deeply debilitating is it?"[239]

Whether or not fear of success reflects personal motivation or social reality, and whether or not it affects actual performance, I believe that if it presently exists at all it is a temporary phenomenon that will soon disappear. When young women are afforded more successful role models and more opportunities to observe how much fun (and power and money) success brings, they will rapidly lose any anxiety they have about it. Furthermore, in contrast to the current stereotype of successful women as unfeminine, I think young women will begin to discover that "success is sexy"—it increases rather than decreases their attractiveness to the opposite sex. Just as in the past many women have been attracted to powerful men (even though they were not necessarily "handsome"), it is likely that in the future more men will find dynamic and powerful women attractive.

In fact, after reading this passage in 1983, one of my students suggested that fear of success had already been replaced by fear of failure among her undergraduate peers:

> The "climate of nonexpectations" and "fear of success" are both concepts that appear outdated to me. We now have all these positive role models and are expected to achieve. While tenured women professors are still outnumbered, those that are here are bright, articulate, knowledgeable, and attractive. In fact, I had a real "Aha!" reaction when I read the sentence about success being sexy: every male student in my English honors seminar fell in love with Professor ———.
>
> For us, I think the fear of success has been transformed to a fear of failure. Expecting to maintain careers as prestigious as those of our male peers, college women also expect, and feel they are expected, to become devoted wives and mothers. Taking on the traditionally male role in the working force, they also have to face the burden of maintaining the traditionally female role at home. The fear of failure is a natural reaction to these seemingly impossible expectations.

As this quote suggests, the anxiety that many college women feel may be exacerbated by cultural pressures on the career woman to prove that she is also a good wife and mother.

The Cultural Imperatives

The college woman who aspires to a successful career faces two cultural imperatives to prove that she is also a successful woman: one is to bear children; the other is to make sure that her occupational achievements do not exceed those of her husband.

Because both men and women may have doubts about the femininity of successful career women,[240] women may feel under particular pressure to prove their femininity. Lois Hoffman suggests that having a baby may provide the proof the career woman feels she needs.[241] (It may also force her to devote a great deal of time and energy to family roles and thereby reassert their priority in her life.) In a 1971 study of undergraduate women at the University of Michigan, Hoffman's question "What is the most womanly thing you can imagine?" most often elicited the response, "To have a baby."[242]

In view of this response, it is not surprising to find that several studies of women in the professions indicate that women in traditionally more masculine fields (law, medicine, and the hard sciences), women facing the strongest pressures to prove their femininity, tend to express a desire for more children than women in more conventionally feminine fields (the arts, humanities, education, and nursing).[243] However, if motherhood solves one set of anxieties, its demands, especially in large families, may easily create other pressures and role conflicts for the young career woman.

A second cultural imperative is that wives should not exceed their husbands' status and occupational attainment.[244] As one Stanford student reported, "When my [high school basketball team] coach heard that I was accepted at Stanford, he said: 'That's great. Now you'll be able to find a husband who is both a better athlete and smarter than you.' " Two others noted the subtle acceptance of this attitude among their peers:

> Frankly, I am amazed at the number of supposedly intelligent men here who do not really want a woman to be their equal. No one would ever admit it, of course. It's not socially correct to be so blatant (at least in mixed company), but the message gets across in more subtle ways. . . . While they voice disdain for blatant sexism, they actually feel more comfortable with women who do not challenge them. They want to be king.
>
> Even though they give lip service to egalitarian norms and proudly announce the publication of their girlfriends' latest editorial, when you get right down to it a lot of Stanford men feel that "they can afford" to have a wife who caters to them.

Hoffman suggests that for educated women a successful marital relationship often requires that both partners perceive the husband to be the more intelligent or successful in his career.[245]

> [A]ny change in this perception may be a threat to the husband's sense of masculinity, the wife's sense of femininity, and thus to the love relationship. In many cases this threat may come simply from a change in the established equilibrium, such as when the career-wife has a success experience, or her husband has a failure; or when the nonworking wife considers returning to a career or seeking further education.[246]

How can the new woman balance these cultural imperatives with the demands of a career? How can she be and do everything? One way to resolve the conflict is to have a clear sense of priority. Women's socialization suggests that they should treat work as a "job" and put their responsibilities to husband and family first. Is this what college women are choosing to do?

The limited data on occupational aspirations, career decisions, and dual-career marriages suggest that many still are.[247] And much of the pressure to continue to do so comes from their husbands, for changes in male expectations about women's roles appear to be lagging far behind women's aspirations. Many college men still want their wives to put husband and family first.[248] Komarovsky's 1973 interviews with college men revealed that very few wanted their wives to work continuously or expressed any willingness to alter their own lives or careers to provide work opportunities for their wives.[249] Most preferred that their wives remain out of the labor force entirely until their children completed school. A large number did not want their wives to work outside the home at any time, while the majority did not want their wives to work after the children were born. Thus, as Aletha Huston-Stein and Ann Higgins-Trenk noted, "Although many men want an intellectually equal companion with her own interests and talents, few seem aware of the need for such women to have a career rather than an occasional job, and most do not recognize the difficulties inherent in long interruptions of a career."[250]

There are some indications that college men are beginning to change. In 1983, 80 percent of the Stanford men in a course on Great Issues said they wanted their wives to be their intellectual equals (rather than "have her look up to me"), and 62 percent said that they expected their wives to work when their children were under five (as did 80 percent of the female students). In addition, 77 percent of the male students expected their wives to be working when their children were over five (as did 94 percent of the female students). While it is difficult to know how to evaluate these "abstract" preferences, they do suggest, at a minimum, increased acceptance of the notion of continuous employment for married mothers.

More important, however, has been the dramatic change in the percentage of college women who seem to recognize the disruptive effects of an interrupted career pattern.[251] In the past, college women who said that they planned to have a career typically assumed that they would interrupt it with some years spent at home while their children were young. Mirra Komarovsky, a sociologist who has followed the career aspirations of Barnard College women over four decades, reports that only 12 percent of the students in 1943 thought that they would have a family and a career with only minimum interruptions for child bearing.[252] By 1950, 20 percent of the students said they planned a career with minimal interruption for children—a percentage that remained stable until the early 1970s.[253] By 1979, however, the percentage had risen to 48 percent.[254] (Stanford women in 1983, as noted above, indicated that 80 percent of them expected to continue working with preschool children.) Thus at least half of the college women of the 1980s seem prepared to make the serious commitment to a career uninterrupted (or minimally interrupted) by childbearing and child rearing.

Yet, at the same time that more women are giving priority to their careers, one can also discern some "backlash" and reversion to traditional priorities. Faced with careers that need more than full-time attention during the prime childbearing years of the twenties and thirties, the unavailability of part-time work in many professions, the lack of lengthy maternity leave policies, the scarcity of day-care, and the unwillingness of male partners to take equal responsibility for child rearing, many young women are now saying that they would rather interrupt their careers to spend time with their children instead of trying to run a three-ring circus.[255] Thus a 1980 Brown University study of 3,000 New England college students found that "77 percent of the women felt that mothers should either not work at all or should work only part-time while their children were under five. Some 80 percent of the men agreed."[256]

Still, unlike the women of previous generations, almost all of the women in the Brown survey planned to work or go to graduate school after graduation. Most planned to establish themselves in a career in their twenties and to have children in their thirties. But they did not want to be superwomen. Many felt threatened by the high divorce rate and expressed fears about the possibility of combining marriage, children, and career and doing all of them well. A number of these women did not want to put their children in day-care, and did not want to miss out on the opportunity of raising them; they planned to leave work to rear the children themselves. Some blamed the women's movement for creating pressure to try to do all three things at once, without telling them how to do it, rather than blaming the society that made it so hard for the woman trying to do it all. Instead of working to change obstacles in society, most of the women interviewed were bent on figuring out individual solutions.[257]

In interpreting these data, sociologist Mirra Komarovsky suggested that the women were in the process of making the "radical" discovery that our society's rhetoric of equality is just rhetoric, and that they felt overwhelmed by the adjustments necessary to make their lives work out on the individual level.[258]

In one interesting study, sociologist Laurie Cummings set out to examine the differences among college women choosing different patterns of combining marriage, motherhood, and work. She found that women who are feminists not only express greater confidence in their ability to combine job, family, and marriage but also make more concrete plans for achieving their aims. They are more likely to plan to go to graduate school and to plan a continuous rather than an interrupted career.[259] They also seem to have clearer ground rules for an egalitarian marriage. For example, Cummings asked her respondents, "How do you feel about women who work to put their husbands through school? Under what circumstances would you be willing to do this?"

> The least feminist women tend either to reject or accept the proposal about putting their husbands through school. . . . The most feminist women were more likely than the other groups to talk about the conditions for considering it. For instance, most either said they would support their husband if he would do the same for them or if it did not interfere with their own plans. In this respect there is evidence that their expectations and ideas of marital and familial duties differ from those of the less feminist women, just as their ideas about a career differ. The more feminist women have some sense of their ground rules for an egalitarian marriage; their answers suggest that they have certain *quid pro quo* established from which they would bargain.[260]

Along these lines it is interesting to note two indexes of what might be considered a quid pro quo for an egalitarian marriage among my Stanford students. Only 40 percent of the women in my class on the Family and the Law were planning to take their husbands' names upon marriage. In contrast, 32 percent were committed to retaining their birth names and 14 percent were planning hyphenated or combined names (the remaining 14 percent were still undecided). These students were surveyed during the first week of classes before they were likely to be influenced by the subject matter of the course.

A second index of student concern with establishing an egalitarian marriage is the significant number of women who are planning to have a contract. Although my students may have been influenced by my own work in this area,[261] when surveyed in the first week of class, 56 percent of them said they planned to have a clear agreement (written or unwritten) with their prospective partner about careers, finances, and child care. An additional 25 percent said they would seriously consider a contract, while only 19 percent rejected the concept.

A third index, about which I do not have any data, is the insistence of at least some women that their own careers have top priority. In the past, as noted above, most achievement-oriented women shifted gears and compromised their own career plans when they became seriously involved with men. Today, in contrast, in some relationships it is the men who are shifting gears and supporting their wives' careers. Although I do not know how common this pattern is, it is apparent that at least some young couples are willing to adopt this solution:

> I think I am just as smart as ——— [her current boyfriend], and I am certainly more ambitious. . . . He is proud of me and totally supportive. . . . He is willing to follow me to law school, since he knows how important that is to me.

Although the solutions may not be easy, one change that is evident among the college women of today is an increased *awareness of the tough choices* they are facing. Nanerl Keohane, the president of Wellesley College, quoted a student editorial that eloquently rejects the challenge to be superwoman:

> For a while it seemed that we might be the new superwomen, juggling family, career, and personal satisfaction while still leaving time for good works and political involvement. No one believes that anymore.
>
> Instead, we are at the beginning of a series of tough choices. Should we marry now, or later in our career? Should we have children early, later, or not at all? Do we want a job, a profession, or a career? Should we major in anthropology or computer science? Rather than exhilarating, these choices are exhausting. Most of them lead us in the direction not of satisfaction or complacency, but of guilt. Will we neglect our children for our careers or vice versa? Rather than supporting us, we find that society is adding more guilt. Who will read to the blind and put up campaign posters while we are in the board room?
>
> Further, we know that the fight is not over. Women do not have equal rights in this country, nor are they paid equally, but we cannot afford to solve this problem by withdrawing from the work force nor by becoming, at the expense of ourselves, superwomen. We must all accept equal responsibilities for the future as well as equal rights, as we share equally the pressure of finding employment as men.
>
> The fact that another more vocal generation chooses to condemn our life-styles does not make them invalid. If our "sisters" will not support us then we, at least, can start this year by supporting each other in what is going to be for many of us much tougher lives than Gloria Steinem ever led us to believe.[262]

Although it has been assumed that the more roles a woman has the more stress she has, Grace Baruch, Rosalind Barnett, and Caryl Rivers found that having multiple roles actually enhances a woman's well-being.[263] In interviews with 300 hundred women between thirty-five and fifty-five years old, Baruch et al. found that women experienced less stress when they had a balance of involvements in jobs they liked, good marriages, and their children. This was most true for women with higher prestige jobs; married women with children and lower level jobs experienced a great deal of stress. As Baruch et al. note:

> Contrary to the conventional wisdom, women who are employed are better off in challenging, demanding work than in the occupations long thought to be "suitable" for women. A physician can earn a good income on a part-time basis, and can arrange her life so that she can get to her child's school concert during the day—a nurse can't.[264]

Baruch et al. also found that women who invest in just one role, such as being a homemaker, experienced a great deal of stress. "Being responsible for raising children may be today's high-risk job." They conclude that "women should stop thinking in either/or terms—a woman's well-being is enhanced when she takes on multiple roles."[265]

New Demographic Trends

Three demographic trends may be creating structural inducements for women to be more career-oriented, whether they "intend" it or not. The rising age at marriage, postponed childbearing, and declining fertility, make it easier for women who have begun their careers before marriage to stay in the labor force, and the longer women stay in the labor force the more likely they are to "get hooked" on work.[266]

The reinforcing cycle begins when young women postpone marriage and childbearing within marriage, "they experience a relatively long period of time after completing high school or college during which they may advance in their careers."[267] This work experience increases their career involvement. Even women who enter work with no firm commitment to it commonly find that their involvement increases over time.[268] And the longer they remain in the labor force, the more difficult it becomes for them to give up the benefits it confers in terms of income, economic independence, recognition, sense of achievement, and challenge.

In addition, the family of the working woman comes increasingly to rely on her salary. A family accustomed to a two-income level of living is loath to abandon one leg of its support (especially in periods of inflation).[269] This creates another structural pressure for women to remain in the labor force.

The greater the rewards women receive from work, the more likely they are to postpone childbearing; the longer the period before childbearing, the more their work orientation is strengthened. In addition, women who postpone childbearing are likely to have fewer children, and fewer children make it easier for mothers to remain in the labor force even when their children are young. (In 1980, 45 percent of all married women with children under six were in the labor force, in contrast to less than 20 percent before 1960.)[270] This pattern of continuous labor force participation creates, in turn, another structural inducement for more serious career commitments. An uninterrupted work history means that a worker can acquire more experience. This often leads to more job opportunities, which in turn lead to higher wages and more psychic satisfaction from work, which in turn lead to an increased commitment to work.*

While it is possible for women to continue to view these commitments as "job" commitments rather than "career" commitments, it is easy to see how structural factors might increasingly undermine that definition. In addition, a continuous work history, higher wages, and increased work satisfaction should provide women with more ammunition to demand the *quid pro quo* that Cummings's feminist women seek to establish in their marriages.

THE INTERACTION OF SOCIALIZATION INFLUENCES: THE CASE OF MATHEMATICS

Although the previous discussion has focused on each aspect of the socialization process separately, in reality the influences of school, peers, and parents are interactive, and they support and reinforce each other. It is useful to focus on one specific area of education to illustrate this interactive process. I have chosen mathematics for this case study because of its vital role as a "critical filter" in the selection of college majors. Most of the college majors that readily lead to prestigious occupations—in medicine, chemistry, physics, engineering, computer science, architecture, and even agriculture and business administration—require either college calculus or statistics. But few women have the high school math necessary to take these courses and few colleges offer compensatory math preparation. In 1972, sociologist Lucy Sells found that only 8 percent of the entering female students at the University of California at Berkeley had sufficient math prerequisites (four years of high school math) to enable them to major in science, engineering, or any of the other math-based subjects.[271] In contrast, 57 percent of the entering male students had sufficient high school math. Thus the potential choice of majors and subsequent career opportunities of 92 percent of the women were severely limited by their lack of mathematical training.†

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*Of course the opposite cumulative pattern also operates. As Huston-Stein and Higgins-Trenk observe, "the 'timing' of marriage, childbearing, education, and work have long-term implications for the life patterns of women. At one extreme, the probability of thwarted education and poverty accompanying adolescent motherhood is very high. . . . Once a choice is made, particularly having a child, the range of options becomes more limited, or at least some become more difficult to pursue. Although the majority of college women now anticipate both a career and marriage, they are often unrealistic about the difficulties of combining child rearing with a career (S. A. Shields, *Personality Trait Attribution and Reproductive Role*, M.A. Thesis, Pennsylvania State University, Department of Psychology, 1973). Many may make choices affecting their future life patterns without adequate understanding of the implications of those decisions." Huston-Stein and Higgins-Trenk, "Development of Females from Childhood through Adulthood," 278.

†In October 1977 Sells replicated her study at the University of Maryland, surveying a stratified sample of incoming freshmen by race and sex. She found the proportions still much the same: 57 percent of the white males had four years of high school math; 20 percent of the black males; 15 percent of the white females (a slight improvement); and only 10 percent of the black females.

Let us begin with the question of whether there are sex differences in mathematical ability. While many researchers have investigated this subject, the results are mixed and nonconclusive. Further, as Professor John Ernest has observed, there is no consensus as to what "mathematical ability" is: some researchers measure computational proficiency, others geometric or algebraic aptitude, while psychologists usually measure some more precise and specific intellectual function.[272]

A comprehensive survey of research evidence on sex differences in math performance concluded that there were no clear findings: some studies showed girls performing better; others, done with students at the same grade level, found boys doing equally well or better.[273] One explanation of the inconsistent findings may be found in the test-taking behavior of boys and girls. Boys do better on tests that reward guessing (which many standardized tests do) because boys are more likely to guess at the answers to questions than are girls.[274]

Although it may be premature to conclude that there are no sex differences in mathematical ability and performance, what seems clear in light of the contradictory evidence is that, if ability differences do exist, they cannot be very strong. Nevertheless, girls seem to get the message that they do not have the same mathematical ability as boys. As a result, they have less confidence in their mathematical skills and screen themselves out of math courses. How do girls come to believe they have less mathematical ability?

Surprisingly, we find no sex differences in *liking* for arithmetic. In a 1973 study of students in grades two through twelve, Ernest and his colleagues at the University of California, Santa Barbara found that, although boys tended to prefer science and girls tended to prefer English, both boys and girls liked mathematics in equal proportions (about 30 percent of both sexes said it was their favorite subject; 24 percent liked it second best).[275]

This lack of sex difference in mathematics preference holds true up to the twelfth grade, although the popularity of math declines in the high school years for both boys and girls. Ernest concludes there is nothing intrinsic about math that makes it more appealing to one sex. Nevertheless, he assumes that men take more mathematics courses "not for the superficial reason that they like mathematics more than women but because, whether they like it or not, they are aware that such courses are necessary prerequisites to the kinds of future occupations, in medicine, technology or science, they envision for themselves."[276]

Let us examine how parents, peers, and teachers influence this process. With respect to parents, Ernest found that both boys and girls get more help from their mothers with homework in all subjects until the sixth grade. But beginning in the sixth grade, the father helps more in mathematics. The father then is the "authority" on mathematics and continues this role through high school. This fact alone must have its subtle influence on a young girl's (or boy's) attitude.[277]

While peer group attitudes are sex-neutral in the elementary school years (boys say that boys do better in all subjects while girls say that girls do better in all subjects), by high school a consensus emerges, and more students say boys do better than girls in mathematics.[278] (Only 16 percent of all students thought girls did better; 52 percent thought there was no difference.)

Similarly, Lynn Fox, an educator who studied precocious math students for her doctoral thesis at Johns Hopkins University, found that "there are more negative stereotypes for math-gifted girls than boys." Further, mathematically apt girls "seem more willing to sacrifice intellectual stimulation to social stimulation."[279] Other studies have confirmed that girls' performance in math plummets at around age twelve when adolescence makes them more aware of social roles.[280]

Along the same lines, sociologist Sanford Dornbusch reports that, when high school students were asked "When you get a poor grade, which reason do you think usually causes the poor grade?" most students gave lack of effort as the reason in every subject. However, when it came to math, 26 percent of the females gave lack of ability as the basis for a poor grade, compared to 15 percent of the males.[281] Female students in every ethnic group in San Francisco were more than three times as likely to say, "I'm not good in math" as the reason for a poor grade as "I'm good in math" as the basis for a good grade.[282] Further, Dornbusch reports, this pattern was found in no other subject for either males or females.

Elizabeth Fennema and Julia Sherman, who have studied how sexual stereotyping affects attitudes and proficiency in mathematics, conclude "there is, then, an accumulation of evidence which points to the conclusion that sexual stereotyping of mathematics as a male domain operates through a myriad of subtle influences from peer to parent and within the girl herself to eventuate in the fulfillment of the stereotyped expectation of a female head that's not much for figures."[283]

Sheila Tobias's book *Overcoming Math Anxiety* has a section entitled "Street Mathematics," in which she suggests that in addition to negative reinforcement, girls miss learning mathematics naturally at play. For example, she observes that baseball calculations of runs batted in provide challenges in fractions, ratios, and percentages, and throwing and catching a ball involves visualizing a parabolic curve.[284] Similarly, handling a stopwatch or building and taking apart mechanical objects train boys to think mathematically and, even more important, demonstrate the practical utility of mathematics.

Stereotyped attitudes of peers and students are reinforced by (and are also a result of) the messages they receive in school—both in textbooks and in the expectations of teachers. Lenore Weitzman and Diane Rizzo have shown that the most widely used textbooks portray math as a masculine domain.[285] They found that males outnumbered females three to one in math textbook illustrations, and many of the problems perpetuated extreme sex-role stereotypes. For example, women were shown having trouble counting to three; girls were stereotyped in problems as "girls who cry"; and Alan earned more than Jane for doing the same hourly work.

With regard to teachers' expectations, Ernest reports that 41 percent of the elementary and high school teachers he interviewed felt that boys did better in mathematics, while none of them felt that girls did better.[286] Such expectations may eventually have a "Pygmalion effect"—that is, the student may perform much as the teacher expects. This creates a self-fulfilling prophecy in which those expected to do well perform as expected. Thus, if 41 percent of the teachers expect superior performance from boys, they may, in fact, help to create it. Conversely, however, when teachers expect female students to do poorly in math, they must accordingly affect the girls' performance, or at least the girls' attitudes and expectations. (Of course there is always the unusual girl who persists despite lack of encouragement. For example, a tiny survey conducted at Stanford revealed that women majoring in natural sciences, mathematics, and engineering had received less encouragement to pursue math studies than had any group of Stanford males, even males who were majoring in history or the humanities.[287] These "exceptions" are discussed in the section on achievers; see pages 215–23.)

Recent research has also documented different treatment of boys and girls by mathematics teachers. Math teachers tend to focus their attention on boys and ignore their female students. Joann Rossi Becker found that teachers are more likely to initiate verbal contact with male students and to give males feedback that sustains the interaction, even when male students give partially correct, incorrect, or no answers.[288] In her observations of high school geometry teachers, Becker counted that 70 percent of all teacher encouragement was given to males.[289] Although active discouragement was less common, female students received 90 percent of the discouraging comments from teachers. As a result of the diminished teacher attention they received, female students were observed becoming more passive during the year.[290]

For many girls, the result of all these socialization pressures—from peers and parents and teachers—is what Tobias has labeled "math anxiety."[291] According to Tobias, math anxiety is an

> "I can't" syndrome, and whenever it strikes—for some as early as sixth grade, with word problems; for others, with the first bite of algebra; for still others, not until calculus or linear algebra or statistics, after a high school record of achievement in mathematics—it creates the same symptoms and response. "I can't do this. No amount of practice or trying will make it work for me. I never really understood math. I always memorized and got away with it. Now I've hit the level I always knew was there. I can't do it."
>
> Once a person has become frightened of math, she or he begins to fear all manner of computations, any quantitative data, and words like "proportion," "percentage," "variance," "curve," "exponential."[292]

I began this section by pointing to mathematics as an example of the interactive and cumulative effect of pressures from peers, parents, and teachers—all pointing in the same direction, all telling girls that mathematics is a masculine domain. However, since all the socialization influences point in the same direction, a change in any *one* of them could break the pattern of *consistent* reinforcement. Thus, encouragement from a single parent or teacher, or peer support from just one or two other "math freaks," could break the cycle.

One experimental study along these lines was conducted by Lynn H. Fox at Johns Hopkins University.[293] She worked on two experimental summer programs that allowed bright sixth grade students to take accelerated algebra. The first program was offered to both boys and girls. However, fewer girls than boys enrolled in the program, and those girls who did attend enjoyed the class less and accomplished less than the boys in the program. In fact, several girls who were making satisfactory progress wanted to drop the course because they did not like "competing with the boys."[294] Thus, although both the girls and the boys were chosen on the basis of their mathematical ability, their success with the program was quite different.

The second program attempted to create a special class that would appeal to girls. This class was limited to girls and was organized around small-group and individual instruction. It was conducted informally, and cooperative rather than competitive activities were stressed. There were three women teachers who were expected to serve as role models, and whenever possible the teachers emphasized ways in which mathematics could be used to solve social problems.[295] "The ultimate goal was to make the girls more self-sufficient in studying mathematics and to find the experience challenging and satisfying."[296]

Fox found that the girls who completed the second program were successful in learning algebra at a high level. By the end of the summer, eighteen of the girls in the experiment were ready to begin the study of Algebra II. But the researchers were surprised to find that many of these girls subsequently encountered negative reactions at school. When they tried to enroll in Algebra II, nine of the eighteen discovered that their principal or guidance counselor was reluctant to place them in the class. Three of these girls were finally persuaded to repeat Algebra I, and one girl was placed on one-month probation in Algebra II. The remaining fourteen were officially enrolled for Algebra II, but a number of them were told they were not expected to perform well. They were also warned that they would be put back into Algebra I if they did not succeed quickly in the course. In fact, several counselors and teachers expressed negative feelings toward the program and told the girls not to come to them for help.[297] By the end of the first six weeks of school two more girls were transferred back into Algebra I, and at the end of the first semester another two were put back. "Thus, out of eighteen girls who completed the program, only eleven girls (61 percent) were able to accelerate their progress in school."[298] Fox notes:

> While it is difficult to believe that teachers would deliberately try to fail some of the girls . . . several parents reported that the schools were determined to get the girls out of Algebra II . . . and more than one reported that the teacher told the student that she didn't think the girl could possibly know algebra well enough after only three months of study to do well in Algebra II. Whether or not teachers or counselors did indeed intentionally fail some girls, it seems likely that such negative attitudes worked against the girls.[299]

Fox concluded that a major difference between the girls who were successful and those who were not was in their reports about the attitude of teachers and school officials. While all the girls who were less successful reported problems with the school, only one of the successful girls reported having problems with her teacher and guidance counselor. In fact, the girls who were considered the very best students in their Algebra II class had teachers, counselors, and principals who were highly enthusiastic about the program and were pleased with the success of these girls.[300]

In another experimental program, Fennema and her colleagues increased the female enrollment in math classes by describing the need for mathematics in many careers and showing videotapes (now being used nationally) for teachers and counselors.[301] They also reduced the perception of math as a male domain among targeted teachers, counselors, and students.

Finally, one striking example of the impact of a single pro-math influence is provided by Professor Joan Birman of Barnard–Columbia:

> I learned last year, to my astonishment, that for about four years running, the honors calculus course had been all male, in spite of the fact that admission was based on an open competitive examination. This fall, one of the senior mathematics majors and myself made an intensive effort to encourage women to *try the exam!* The typical answer was, "I know I won't pass it,"—to which we replied over and over, "Well, if you try it, at worst you will confirm what you already know, and only an hour of time will have been lost." After three days of such advising, the big day came, the exam was given, and this year the class has five men and five women![302]

All of these recent experiences suggest the powerful potential of contrary influences. Other intervention strategies, such as peer counseling (Mills College, Oakland, Calif.), alternative math curricula for women students (Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass.), Math Anxiety Clinics (Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.), and Adult Group Therapy (Mind over Math, New York, N.Y.), operate on the same theoretical assumption. As Tobias states, "Math anxiety is probably as much a result, as it is a cause of math avoidance in women and girls."[303]

We now turn to the question of how women manage to achieve in other spheres—despite the socialization pressures we have discussed.

THE ACHIEVERS: WHERE DOES SOCIALIZATION FAIL?

Although this discussion has emphasized formal academic and occupational achievement throughout, it should be clear that there are other areas in which both men and women are motivated to achieve. For example, some people make lifetime careers of philanthropy or unpaid volunteer work. Some devote their energies to civic affairs. Others aspire to positions of reponsibility in religious or recreational organizations. Still others undertake technical or creative pursuits such as photography, painting, weaving, or wine making. Even when these activities bring no monetary return, they often give participants a sense of achievement and success.

Nonetheless, there are limits to the rewards that unpaid activities can bring in American society. In general we accord status on the basis of occupational and financial achievement. It is therefore useful to focus on these activities; when we do, it seems evident that women have not typically been socialized to adopt the personality characteristics that are related to success in these prestigious and financially lucrative occupations.

Yet it is equally clear that there are many significant exceptions to this generalization. Many girls somehow do not get the message that they are supposed to be less intelligent and less successful than boys until they reach high school,* and some manage to avoid it through their college years. Further, in spite

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*This point was raised by Naomi Weisstein in "Kinder, Kuche, Kirche as Scientific Law," *Motive*, Apr. 1969.

of overwhelming pressures to conform to the traditional feminine role, many women aspire to intellectual and professional success, and a significant number of them attain it. How can we account for these women? Are they deviants, or have we presented an oversocialized portrait of women in this article?

In the statistical sense, women who have attained professional success are deviants, in that they are distinctly in the minority; but it is important to realize what a significant minority they are. I have already noted the wide range of individual differences in both sexes and the extent to which our summary has excluded the statistical minority of woman achievers. In this section, I focus on this deviant group, composed of female doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, professors, scientists, corporation executives, writers, etc., and ask what has been different about the socialization of these women. The following discussion will, of necessity, be speculative, because there has not yet been a systematic study of the socialization of high-achieving women. It is meant to be suggestive.

Family Background

We might speculate on various family situations that would encourage a girl's occupational aspirations: being a successful businessman's only child, who has been encouraged to take over her family's business; being the daughter of a female doctor, encouraged to assist in her mother's office; or being the oldest sibling in a large family and therefore finding leadership and authority natural. The possibilities for such special situations to arise are endless.

Let us first consider the ways in which a girl's mother may provide the impetus for achievement. It seems obvious that mothers provide an important source of influence for the goals and ideals of their daughters. A mother's own life, her values, and her personal aspirations can do much to establish the framework from which the young girl views the world and its possibilities. Unfortunately, although the topic has long fascinated and engaged the attention of psychiatrists and novelists, we still know remarkably little about how mothers shape their daughters' life courses, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively. Some of the literature suggests that occupationally successful mothers and mothers possessed of high achievement motivation provide positive models for their daughters. But the reverse has also been suggested—i.e., that whatever the achievement motivation of mothers the daughters tend to assert a contrary orientation in an attempt to attain something different for themselves.

One line of research that has produced fairly consistent results has explored the relationship between mothers' employment history and their daughters' work orientation. In summarizing this literature, psychologists Aletha Huston-Stein and Ann Higgins-Trenk note that "daughters of employed mothers (i.e., mothers who were employed during some period of the daughter's childhood or adolescence) more often aspire to a career outside the home, get better grades in college, and aspire to more advanced education."[304] These young women are likely to see employment as "natural" for a woman and to plan their own futures accordingly.

Ruth Hartley found that girls between the ages of eight and eleven had future plans that were significantly related to their mothers' work roles. When asked what they expected to do when they grew up, significantly more daughters of nonemployed mothers gave "housewife" as their primary choice.[305] In contrast, more of the daughters of working mothers envisioned themselves working, even after marrying and having children. In addition, they were more likely to mention nontraditional professional areas (such as medicine, law, and creative work) as their vocational choices.[306]

Employed mothers also seem to communicate less stereotyped views of sex roles. When compared to daughters of homemakers, daughters of employed women expressed less stereotyped views of the feminine role and were more likely to choose a traditionally masculine occupation.[307] According to Huston-Stein and Higgins-Trenk, "The apparent modeling influence of an employed mother is not a recent phenomenon: it appears across age cohorts, and it appears for both children and adults."[308] In all these studies adult career women more often had mothers who were employed during their childhood than did comparable groups of homemakers.[309]

Yet not all working mothers provide positive work-related role models for their daughters. A daughter's attitudes may depend on her mother's job role, her salary level, the mother's and the father's attitudes toward her work, whether the work-related problems she brings home are seen as stimulating or anxiety-producing—and a number of other factors we have just begun to explore.

Next let us consider the ways in which the father can provide the impetus for his daughter's achievements.

Traditional identification theory assumed that the same-sex parent was the more crucial in determining the sex-role identity of the child. This theory, which grew out of Freudian theory, asserted that, to identify properly as a member of his or her sex, the child must have a same-sex model to imitate.[310] Thus by imitating the father the boy would learn and internalize masculine behavior. Similarly, it was assumed, the girl would learn how to be feminine by imitating the behavior of her mother. According to this theory, the child internalizes not only the particular behavior observed but also a complex integrated pattern of sex-related behavior.[311] I would suggest instead, that a large amount of sex-role behavior can be learned only through interaction with the opposite sex. This is especially true of the "feminine role," which is often defined in terms of relationships with others. It is thus possible that the father teaches the girl how to be feminine as much as the mother does.

Identification theory may be challenged on another ground as well. Identification theorists have assumed that it is necessary for adult role models to have clearly differentiated sex roles, so that the child can clearly distinguish what is masculine and what is feminine behavior.[312] However, Philip Slater has indicated that adult role models who exhibit stereotyped sex-role identification may impede, rather than facilitate, the child's sex-role identification. Children may find it easier to identify with less differentiated and less stereotyped parental role models.[313] It is more likely that they will internalize parental values when nurturance (the typically feminine role) and discipline (the typically masculine role) come from the same source.

Both of these challenges to traditional identification theory suggest that the father may play an equally important role in his daughter's sex-role socialization. Earlier I suggested that fathers often play a more critical role than mothers in reinforcing sex-role *stereotypes*, because fathers are more likely to want their daughters to be feminine, attractive, affectionate, and socially acceptable. I now suggest that, when fathers do not fit this typical pattern, when they encourage their daughters' achievements and back up their encouragement with practical support, they can provide the single vital influence that breaks the traditional socialization chain. Thus, while a father's encouragement is clearly not the only precursor to female achievement (and, in fact, women are less likely to have an encouraging father than an encouraging mother), when it does exist it can be extremely influential.

Although there are no directly supporting data, sociologist William J. Goode has speculated that one especially strong stimulus to female achievement motivation is the father who not only encourages his daughter but also makes his love and approval dependent on her task performance.[314] He lets her know that he cares about her achievements, and he rewards her when she achieves. This pattern differs from two more common patterns of father–daughter interaction. In one typical pattern, the father gives his daughter unconditional support and love no matter what she does—just because she is his daughter. In the second pattern, the father makes his love contingent upon his daughter's success *in feminine spheres*—that is, his love is given as a reward for her being attractive, sociable, helpful, and affectionate.

In contrast to both of these patterns, the pattern in which the father makes his love contingent upon his daughter's success in *nonfeminine spheres* may be the pattern that stimulates the highest achievement in women. The father who indicates that he considers his daughter's achievement important and who encourages her to achieve for him—and for his love—encourages her as well to strive for success itself. This hypothesis has its parallel in research on male achievement motivation, where David McClelland and Fred Strodbeck have shown that a strong mother–son relationship in which the mother makes her love and approval conditional on her son's success is most conducive to masculine achievement motivation.[315]

Alfred Heilbrun found, in fact, that highly successful girls tend to have an especially close relationship with, and to identify with, a masculine father.[316] This kind of relationship can be a great spur to "masculine" achievement, especially when there are no sons in the family or when the father for some other reason particularly supports and assists his daughter's aspirations. Some research indicates that an achievement-encouraging father is likely to have high occupational status. Having achieved himself, he is willing to encourage achievement in his daughter, particularly when she is his oldest child (or when he has no son).[317] A number of successful women appear to have been their father's "favorite" child and were encouraged to think of themselves as his prime successor. The role and influence of fathers, then, like that of mothers, is a fascinating topic that is open to future research.

The Oversocialized Portrait of Women

Thus far, I have considered high occupational achievement and achievement motivation in women as if it were deviant and therefore required a special explanation. However, an alternative view suggests instead that *most women are* *motivated to achieve*. This perspective would lead one to suspect that much of the literature reviewed in this article exaggerates the cumulative effectiveness of sex-role socialization. In fact, because I have tried to review a large body of literature concisely, I have focused on averages, and have discussed sex-role socialization as if its messages were generally accepted. As a result, I have presented an oversimplified, oversocialized portrait of both women and men.

Let us now shift gears and try to reevaluate the socialization literature that I have reviewed in this article from a more critical perspective. The literature exaggerates the effectiveness of the socialization process in five ways:

1. It is assumed that socialization is a consistent process.
2. It is assumed that sex-role socialization is unidimensional in its behavioral effects.
3. It is assumed that the well-socialized woman has accepted and internalized the feminine role.
4. It is assumed that socialization fosters imitative behavior.
5. It is assumed that socialization ends with formal education, and thereafter an individual's personality and future course are fixed.

Let us examine each of these assumptions.

The first way in which the literature incorrectly portrays the socialization process is that it presents socialization as a consistent process. Thus it is assumed that women are consistently rewarded for feminine behavior and consistently punished for or discouraged from unfeminine behavior. Social learning theory, which is the basis for the bulk of the material presented in this article, holds that sex-appropriate responses are consistently rewarded and reinforced—and sex-inappropriate behavior consistently discouraged or punished—in the young girl until she comes to learn and internalize the feminine role.[318]

Without denying the pressures on women to conform to the feminine role, one can see that women are socialized in an ambivalent or even *contradictory* fashion. At the same time that girls are rewarded for typical feminine behavior they are also rewarded for some types of masculine behavior. This is because what is labeled masculine behavior is generally highly regarded and rewarded in our society. The girl who excels in school, wins the tennis championship, or fixes a broken car receives approval for each of these activities. Although she may be regarded as too aggressive or masculine, she is also admired for her accomplishments. Thus, the feminine role is not consistently reinforced.

Psychologist Zella Luria suggests another form of inconsistency in female socialization. She contends that childhood really doesn't count for middle-class girls.[319] They are rewarded for achievement throughout their childhood and do not become objects of parental concern and protectiveness until adolescence. By then they are well versed in "male" behavior: it is part of their repertoire.

A second assumption in the socialization literature is what I referred to earlier as the unidimensional fallacy. When I examined the literature on black women I noted that, since many people have some "masculine" traits and some "feminine" traits, and since many sex-typed behaviors are situationally specific, it is erroneous to think of individuals as *either* masculine *or* feminine. For example, Sheila Tobias notes that women who succeed in math and science, and who therefore might be considered most deviant of all, do not score low on *all* feminine characteristics but only on those that are inappropriate to their individual self-images. They are "aggressive" (not passive), but they are also "nurturant" and "caring" (not "cold" and "aloof").[320] Further, Nancy Potter found that the women with higher math ability responded positively to a cluster of attributes considered masculine, such as "logical," "persistent," and "intellectual." But this group also scored high on positively valued feminine attributes, such as "warm" and "generous." What these women seemed to be rejecting, the researcher concluded, was not femininity itself but low-valued feminine characteristics such as dependence and passivity. They seemed to have a healthy orientation toward the best of both the male and female worlds.[321]

Similarly, in a study of successful adolescent women, Heilbrun found the subjects both instrumental and expressive; that is, they exhibited the goal-directedness of typically successful males as well as the interpersonal sensitivity of typically successful females.[322] If the scoring of sex-role identities is done on an either–or basis, however, or the "masculine" choices are tallied against the "feminine" choices, these multifaceted combinations of the traits of both sexes are easily overlooked.

A third problem in the socialization literature is that it assumes that women typically internalize the feminine role and derive pleasure, happiness, and satisfaction from it. They enjoy baking fresh cookies for their children, are fulfilled by the use of their administrative talents in running their households, and are gratified when their behind-the-scenes efforts help their husbands and children to achieve in the outside world. Thus it is assumed that women who have been successfully socialized have internalized the feminine role and are satisfied with it. If this were so, then the women who most closely conform to the ideal female role, i.e., the housewives, should be the most contented women. However, housewives seem to be less happy and less fulfilled than their employed counterparts. Almost every study of women's fulfillment has shown that the women who most embrace the traditional feminine role are the least satisfied with their lot.[323] After reviewing the literature on feminine happiness and fulfillment, both Jessie Bernard[324] and Betty Friedan[325] concluded that most women simply are not content with that traditional role.

A fourth difficulty in the socialization literature is that it has probably overestimated the extent to which the socialization process fosters imitative behavior. For example, it is assumed that, when children see girls rewarded for attractiveness and helpfulness and boys rewarded for initiative and independence in picture books, textbooks, movies, or television presentations they will then pattern their behavior after these models. Granted, this inference appears plausible, but the cause-and-effect relationship has never been proved. While many girls will in fact treat the female characters as models, others may write them off as unattractive or unreal, and still others may identify with the male characters. This variation in reactions should lead future researchers to question the assumed success of the socialization process—and to investigate when and under what conditions it does affect behavior. For now, however, it seems likely that the socializing influence of the media has been exaggerated.

The same caveat should be applied to the socializing influence of parents, teachers, and peers. For example, it has been assumed that if parents or teachers or significant peers communicate sex-stereotyped expectations, boys and girls will conform to these expectations. Here again, while this may be true on the average, no one has yet established a clear cause-and-effect relationship. In addition, there are many areas in which we already know that an "expected behavior" commonly does not occur. (For example, in discussing fear of success we noted that girls manifesting the most fear of success were honors students). Thus, while it is likely that most women will not excel in the absence of supportive parents or teachers or peers, some obviously will—and do—and, in fact, some seem to positively thrive on the challenge posed by a disparaging parent, teacher, or friend.

A fifth and final inaccuracy in the socialization literature is that it seems to take for granted the notion that socialization takes place only when one is young. It assumes that when one's formal education is complete (whether at the high school or the college level or at the end of professional school or training), one's personality and life course are irrevocably "fixed." We need not look far for evidence to refute this notion, for it is increasingly clear that education and development continue throughout the life cycle. Even if one clings to the idea that socialization is necessarily linked to formal education (a dubious assumption), a look at the changing pattern of education in recent years will encourage a "life course" perspective. For example, the college enrollment of women between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age increased 102 percent between 1970 and 1974 (from 409,000 per year to 831,000).[326] In fact, women in this age group now constitute one-fifth of the population of college women.[327]

These "older" women are likely to be reentry women—those who have married and had children. As Roxann Van Dusen and Eleanor Sheldon note, such women reflect two of the biggest changes in the life cycle of American women: changes in marital and childbearing patterns that have made continuing education easier to arrange, and changes in the labor market that have enhanced the desirability of acquiring that education.[328] These new outlooks mean that "those women *not* in the traditional student cohort—those who are older, who are married, or who have children—are no longer deemed to have 'missed the boat' by having taken on family roles before completing their schooling."[329] While obviously not all women will decide to return to school, those who do undoubtedly will be subjected to a new set of socialization influences, and it is virtually certain that as a result they will develop and change.

To date, midlife sex-role socialization has received little research attention. Also neglected are most of the socialization experiences that occur in the course of everyday life in the middle and advanced years. As Huston-Stein and Higgins-Trenk observe, we need to study how a person changes "as a result of staying home as a housewife and mother for several years . . . [or] as a result of engaging in a particular kind of job."[330]

One type of extraeducational socialization experience that has received some attention is "the midlife crisis." The literature suggests that midlife crises are often followed by periods of dynamic growth and development.[331] While most of this literature focuses on men, it seems plausible to surmise that women undergo some parallel experiences after midlife crises. My current research on divorced women is suggestive here and supports the notion of growth after radical midlife change.[332] Women who reenter college or graduate school after a divorce are likely to be serious about their work, to earn high grades, to be career-oriented, and to work continuously after graduation. For example, in a nationwide sample of 33,000 graduate students Feldman found that divorced women were more committed to graduate school and careers than either married women or other single women, "despite the fact that almost 70 percent of them had at least one child."[333] While this does not mean that all life crises will have positive effects or will be followed by periods of new growth and development,* it does suggest that they are likely to trigger new socialization and change—and that they deserve more attention as socialization influences in midlife.

The Need for Structural Change

If we are correct in asserting that the socialization of women into traditional female roles is neither totally effective nor totally consistent, then we may legitimately ask why there are not more visible examples of high-achieving women. If, as we have asserted, many women are actually motivated to higher achievement, why has the proportion of women in the professions and in other high-status occupations remained so low?

There are two possible answers to this question. The first is that women's achievement is channeled in a different direction. One obvious direction for a woman with high achievement motivation in the past was to channel her efforts into finding and supporting a successful husband. Several studies have found this to be true. Sheila Tobias suggests that the women who graduated in the 1950s tried to marry the men they themselves wanted to be.[334] And, as noted above, James Pierce found that women with high achievement motivation in 1960 were oriented toward finding high-status husbands.[335] Jean Press and Fraine Whitney[336] and Jean Lipman-Blumen[337] also hypothesized that women saw success in terms of heterosexual relationships and that they attained vicarious gratification from the achievements of their husbands and sons. In fact, Press and Whitney suggest that women with high achievement motivation picked males who would succeed so that they experienced success vicariously.[338]

But even though women have been socialized to regard personal occupational success as difficult or undesirable, it seems unlikely that many women with high achievement motivation would be content with vicarious achievement alone. Unless they are allowed to play a significant role in their husbands' or sons' careers, they are likely to channel their energies elsewhere. It is obvious that the energies of many capable women are channeled into volunteer work or other

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*In fact, Saul Feldman's research suggests that divorced male graduate students feel more burdened and strained than their married or never-married male colleagues. In contrast, divorced female students feel freer to pursue their education. Saul D. Feldman, "Impediment or Stimulant? Marital Status and Graduate Education," in J. Huber, ed., *Changing Women in a Changing Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 231.

nonremunerative pursuits. Other achievement-oriented women may be found in frustrating jobs that are much below their capabilities, or in positions that involve power and capabilities that are neither recognized nor rewarded (with either money or prestige) by their employers.

A second answer to the question of why there are not more visible examples of high-achieving women lies in the structural opportunities available to women in this society. When women are denied real opportunities for advancement and are discriminated against at every stage of the process leading to a professional position, it is not surprising that they have not "made it." Thus, the answer to the question of why more women have not achieved probably lies more directly in the lack of structural opportunities available to them in our society than in the way they have been socialized.

As long as women were denied real career options, it was realistic for them not to put all their energy into occupational goals. As long as they lacked role models of successful career women, were denied structural supports to aid a career, were told they were neurotic or unfeminine if they were dedicated to an occupation, it was not reasonable to expect large numbers of young women to aspire to professional careers. The major way to change their (accurate) perceptions about future options was to create *real options* for them.

Any explanation for the small number of women at the top of the professions, business, and government that blamed women's socialization is one that blames the victim for the lack of opportunity that has been available in our society. The true test of the impact of women's socialization must await a time when women are treated equally, paid equally, and given equal opportunity for advancement.

EPILOGUE

Just five years ago I thought that if equal structural opportunities were made available to women they would—as a group and individually—rise to the challenge. I realized that the process of massive institutional change was a slow one, but I believed that the closed doors and discrimination (on both a conscious and unconscious level) were what "held women back." More recently, however, I have come to give more weight to the subtle effects of the socialization process and the ways in which it handicaps women who are given "equal opportunities" to "compete like men."

I first became aware of the subtle ways in which women's socialization equips them with different values and a different orientation to life in an unexpected context: my current research on divorce. I found that many of the divorced women I interviewed were unwilling to "fight" to get the property or financial support to which they were entitled. These women were more likely than their husbands to express concern about "not wanting to hurt or alienate" their former spouses and "wanting to maintain a good relationship," especially if they had children. They were also more likely to talk about "understanding his feelings" and the need for "compromise," while the men I interviewed were likely to focus on financial issues and to argue in terms of "rights," "logic," "sound business," and "dollars and cents" (the market value of the home, the cost of utilities, what the kids did or did not need). Many of the women were willing to compromise their financial interests for "peace" or what they perceived to be the interests or well-being of their children—even if that meant accepting less financial support for their children. ("After all," they said, "it's only money.") Their nonmonetary, interpersonal orientation frustrated me, because I saw them as selling themselves short financially. They, on the other hand, were bargaining—typically with lower resources and less financial knowledge—for what mattered most to them: the good will and approval of others, maintaining a relationship, not hurting anyone, harmony, and their children's happiness. How could anyone say that these were not as important as the house, car, or support they were forgoing?

Although this example may seem far afield from this article, it illustrates the more subtle ways in which women's socialization may give many women a unique life orientation that can "handicap" them in many situations. In fact, whenever women have to assert their own interests—with husbands, children, friends, work associates, bosses, and/or subordinates—their ability to empathize and their concern for the feelings of others may lead them to compromise their own best interests. Ironically, the interpersonal skills that enable women to get along with others, be helpful, and "work things out" may also handicap them.

While the definition of what is a handicap or an advantage depends on the situation, in the business and professional world women's interpersonal orientation often turns out to be a handicap. Sociologist Teresa Marciano argues that women are disadvantaged in competitive business situations that call for self-assertion because they are accustomed to considering the needs and feelings of others.

> The very ability to anticipate the wishes, needs, and reactions of others is found to promote female subordination in work and in marriage. It short-cuts the negotiative process since the parties are not starting out with equal desires for self-gratification. The more important one's own needs are, the harder the person will bargain for those needs. Women have had to learn first to be conscious of their needs and then to value them as strongly as they value the needs of others. This applies to salary, task sharing, work assignment, ranking in firms, area of specialization—to mention just a few—and in the absence of raised consciousness, women will compromise or give in far more than will men.[339]

Along similar lines, psychologist Carol Gilligan argues that women are more concerned with caretaking, responsibility to others, and relationships, and that in order to be successful they have to move away from "constant attentiveness to others and concern with seeing both sides" and put their own needs forward, learn to care for themselves, and stop subordinating their individual achievements.[340] Although, as Gilligan notes, the fact that women who speak "in a different voice" may be disadvantaged in the occupational world is more a commentary on our society than on women's "failure"—another cautionary note about blaming the victim—it is nevertheless evident that their voice may act as a deterrent to their occupational success.

Women now face the challenge of balancing their socialization to gratify the needs of others with the new imperatives to put their own needs first—in both family and at work. At the same time, our society must face the challenge of harnessing the considerate, caring, and humanistic orientation that women have learned to embody.

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MARY FRANK FOX

Women and higher education: Sex differentials in the status of students and scholars

Education significantly affects women's opportunities in work and society. In fact, in the nineteenth-century movement for women's rights, it was thought that higher education would lead not only to equal suffrage for women but also to widespread political, legal, and economic reforms of benefit to women (Antler 1982, 15).

It is unclear whether gains in education "lead" or "follow" women's progress in other areas. However, it is apparent that women's educational attainment is related to their participation and role in the economy.

To begin with, the more education a woman has, the more likely she is to be employed. Among women sixteen years of age or over who had completed no more than eight years of school, only about one-fifth—22 percent—were in the labor force in 1980. Among women who had completed high school, over half (54 percent) were employed, and for those with five or more years of college, almost three-quarters (72 percent) were in the labor force (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1981, calculations from table 644).

Moreover, women's occupational advancement is more closely linked to their educational attainment than it is for men. Men use their educational credentials for entry to jobs and then rely on job-related experience for advancement. For women, however, formal credentials remain critical throughout their working lives (Featherman 1980). Although women cannot expect to gain the same returns (salary, occupational rank, advancement) on their education as men do (Featherman and Hauser 1976, 481; U.S. Department of Labor 1979, 3), if women's credentials are "less than the best" they can suffer even greater

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inequality in both work and employment (see, for example, Fox 1981, 81).

Finally, because higher education influences the next generation and reflects social trends in American society, the standing of women as faculty members in higher education indicates the position and plight of women in the professions and sets an example to students of the status of women in society.

WOMEN AS STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Historical Background

In America's colonial era, educational opportunities were almost nonexistent for women. The town schools of New England generally excluded girls, or admitted them for just a few hours at inconvenient times when boys were not in attendance (Woody 1966, 177). The few colleges of this era were given over to the training of ministers, and, since women were barred from the ministry, they were excluded from these schools. Only in the wealthiest families, where tutorial education prevailed, were girls sometimes instructed in arts, letters, and literature. For the vast majority of women, education consisted of an apprenticeship in the home, where they learned domestic arts and skills.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, the seminary or academy schools began to open, and these became the prevailing source of education available to women. The seminary or academy schools frequently emphasized "flashy accomplishments of little substantial value," such as fancy needlework (Woody 1966, 399), and have been sorely criticized for their cursory and superficial curricula. Still, along with courses of music, dancing, and sewing, these schools did provide rudimentary training for women in grammar, composition, rhetoric, geography, and arithmetic. More importantly, the seminary and academy schools, which flourished throughout New England, the mid-Atlantic, and the deep South, secured public recognition of and support for female education (Woody 1966). It was from these seminary schools that higher education for women got its start.

During the nineteenth century women's education was also advanced by the normal schools, which were established to train teachers for the growing system of public education. The expansion in public education during this period created great concern to the community about the costs it incurred. Because female teachers earned one-quarter to one-third of the salaries of male teachers, they provided a cost-saving solution (see Woody 1966, 492–93). Thus, they were in demand for the public schools and for the institutes in which teachers were trained. In these institutes, women received solid and useful preparation in principles of education and practices of teaching, and the normal schools certainly provided an impetus to women's education throughout the nineteenth century.

Yet it was not until later in that century that advanced education on a par with that of men was available to women. Before the Civil War, only three private colleges—Oberlin, Hillsdale, and Antioch—and two public colleges—Utah and Iowa—admitted women. Of these, Oberlin College was the first to admit women, in 1837, "ostensibly to provide ministers with intelligent, cultivated, and thoroughly schooled wives" (Graham 1978, 764). In the postbellum period, however, demand factors were important again in expanding opportunities. The shortage of male students and dwindling enrollments during the Civil War encouraged administrators to open their doors to female students (Graham 1978). First-rate women's colleges also opened—starting with Vassar College in 1865, followed by Smith and Wellesley in 1875, Bryn Mawr in 1885, and Mt. Holyoke in 1888. Spurred by the women's rights movement, enrollment in these women's colleges increased by 348 percent between 1890 and 1910. At coeducational colleges, the number of women students grew by even more—438 percent—during that same period (Antler 1982, 18).

At the end of the nineteenth century, higher education for women emphasized the development of character, the pursuit of culture, and the ideals of liberal arts—especially at women's colleges (Antler 1982). These goals were consistent with prevailing notions of femininity and traditional values of womanhood and thus justified "the experiment in female education" (Antler 1982, 20). After the turn of the century, however, the goals of women's education shifted—focusing first on service and utility to society and community and later on vocational and life preparation (Antler 1982). During the early 1920s especially, college curricula for women began to incorporate career preparation. This shift toward career education was most apparent at the women's colleges, since state schools had always emphasized vocational training as part of their mandate to the public.

Yet the focus on career preparation faltered severely in the next decades. Between the 1930s and the 1960s, college women married earlier, bore more children, and turned their attention to homemaking in greater proportions than did the graduates of the early 1920s (Antler 1982, 29; Perun and Giele 1982). Studies indicate that during this period—and especially during the 1950s—few college women had clear vocational goals, and most attended for general education, prestige, and social life. Thus, college had come to occupy an interlude between high school and marriage (and motherhood) for young women (Antler 1982; Chafe, 1972; Graham 1978, 770–71).

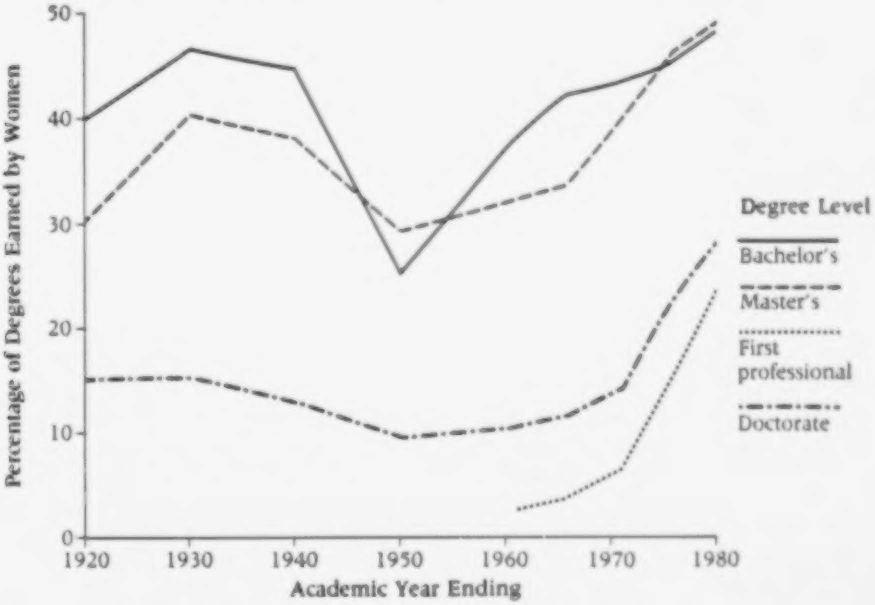
In the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, a resurgence in the women's movement, a decline in fertility, and a dramatic increase in female labor force participation ushered in changes in women's roles in work, society, and thus education as well. Nonetheless, certain patterns—especially the sex segregation of educational fields and the male dominance of educational institutions—continue to restrict women's prospects in higher education.

Recent Data and Trends

Until recently, men were more likely than women to attend college. Parents were more apt to encourage and finance the education of sons, and admissions standards favored males (see Frazier and Sadker 1973, 146–47). In the past few decades, however, the proportion of women going to college has been growing, while the proportion of men has remained stable. Thus, by 1979 women were one-half of college students and almost one-half of recipients of bachelor's degrees (see figure 1).

However, women's proportion of bachelor's degrees has not increased in simple linear fashion over the century (see figure 1). Before World War II,

FIGURE 1 Percentage of degrees earned by women, 1919–20 to 1979–80



Sources: 1919–20 to 1949–50 data from Douglas Adkins, *The Great American Degree Machine* (Berkeley, Calif.: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1975), table A-2, and from National Center of Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 1981* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), table 95; 1960–61 to 1975–76 data from Mary Lou Randour, Georgia L. Strasburg, and Jean Lipman-Blumen, "Women and Higher Education: Trends in Enrollment and Degrees Earned," *Harvard Educational Review* 52 (May 1982): table 4; 1979–80 data from National Center for Education Statistics, *Degrees Awarded to Women: 1979 Update* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1981), tables 1, 3, 5, 7.

women's proportion of bachelor's degrees was higher than in the early postwar years. Women's proportion of bachelor's degrees particularly dipped in 1949–50 when men were using the GI Bill for education. The proportion of women did not reach prewar levels again until the mid-1970s (see figure 1).

In addition, sex differences in higher education have varied by racial and ethnic status. Among Chicanos and Native Americans, for example, disparities in college attainment between males and females have been greater than among whites (Astin and McNamara 1982; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1978). While 34 percent of white men and 22 percent of white women between the ages of twenty-five and twenty-nine had completed four years of college in 1976, among Mexican Americans, 11 percent of the men and only 5 percent of the women had attained a college degree. Among Native Americans, 8 percent of the men and 4 percent of the women had completed four years of college (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1978, 14). Among Blacks in this age group, however, 11 percent of both women and men had completed four years of college in 1976 (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1978, 14). In 1978–79, women were almost 60 percent of the Black recipients of bachelor's degrees, a higher proportion than among any other minority group or among whites (U.S. Department of Education 1981, table 1).

While current trends on educational attainments of men and women appear promising, closer examination of the data qualify optimism. First, enrollment data are frequently presented and issued by the federal government to serve the political interests of particular groups (see Lipman-Blumen 1979; Tangri and Strasburg 1979). Specifically, data on two-year and four-year institutions, graduate and first professional schools, or part-time and full-time enrollments are aggregated (grouped) in ways that camouflage sex differences and support claims of equity in men's and women's education. Most notably, the aggregation of two-year and four-year institutions has permitted the widely publicized claim that women are actually a majority of the students in higher education. In fact, it is only at the two-year, community colleges that women are in a 54 percent majority. Yet, community college education is a questionable avenue of social mobility for women, since studies indicate that few community college students continue their education at four-year colleges (National Center for Education Statistics 1977), that the two-year degree is of little value in the labor market (Wilms 1980), and that the community college perpetuates rather than reduces social class distinctions in American society (Karabel 1972).

Moreover, in assessing women's status in higher education, one must look to men's and women's fields of study. Although fields of study are not as segregated as formerly, males and females continue to concentrate in different areas. At the bachelor's level, men are twice as likely as women to concentrate in business and physical sciences, and nine times more likely to specialize in engineering. Women tend to major in humanities, certain health fields, and especially education (see table 1). Hence, undergraduate men are clustered in areas that lead to better paying, higher status jobs—in science, business, and technology—while women cluster in the poorer paying, lower status areas in the arts, health, and education.

Finally, it is important to look beyond baccalaureate education to the trends in professional and graduate education, since this education is prerequisite for employment in higher ranking positions in professions, business, and government. Although women have made some striking gains in graduate and professional education, sex differences still prevail, especially in fields of concentration.

Twenty years ago, women earned only about 3 percent of all professional (e.g., medical, dental, law, veterinary) degrees awarded, and throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, that proportion grew very slowly. But between 1970 and 1975 the proportion of professional degrees awarded to women grew from 7 percent to 16 percent, and by 1979 women were earning 24 percent of all professional degrees (see figure 1, earlier). However, men continue to predominate in the most powerful and prestigious areas in professional education. In medicine, for example, the highly remunerative specialities such as surgery are overwhelmingly male domains, and the lower status and more marginal specialties such as pediatrics, public health, and psychiatry have disproportionately high

TABLE 1 Distribution of bachelor's degrees, by sex and discipline division, 1971 and 1980–81

Discipline division	Percentage of degrees awarded[a]			
	Women		Men	
	1971	1980–81	1971	1980–81
Agriculture and natural resources	0.1	1.4	2.5	3.2
Architecture and environmental design	0.2	0.6	1.0	1.4
Area studies	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2
Biological sciences	2.9	4.1	5.3	5.1
Business and management	2.9	15.9	22.1	27.0
Communications	1.0	3.7	1.5	3.0
Computer and information sciences	0.1	1.1	0.4	2.2
Education	36.0	17.5	9.5	5.8
Engineering	0.1	1.7	10.4	14.3
Fine and applied arts	4.9	5.5	2.6	3.1
Foreign languages	4.2	1.7	1.1	0.5
Health professions	5.4	11.4	1.2	2.2
Home economics	3.0	3.8	0.1	0.2
Law	(b)	(b)	0.1	(b)
Letters	12.2	5.1	6.0	3.4
Library science	0.3	0.1	(b)	(b)
Mathematics	2.6	1.0	3.2	1.3
Military sciences	(b)	(b)	0.1	0.1
Physical sciences	0.8	1.3	3.9	3.8
Psychology	4.6	5.7	4.4	3.0
Public affairs and services	1.2	4.5	1.0	3.2
Social sciences	15.8	9.6	20.6	12.0
Theology	0.3	(b)	0.6	0.1
Interdisciplinary studies	1.1	3.8	2.1	3.6

Source: For 1971: National Center for Education Statistics, *Degrees Awarded to Women: 1979 Update* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1981), table 2. For 1980–81: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 1983* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, forthcoming), table 107.

[a] Columns may not add to 100.0 percent because of rounding.

[b] Less than 0.05 percent.

numbers of female students and practitioners (Kutner and Brogan 1979; Wallace 1980; see also Kaufman's article in this book).

Similarly, women have made gains in attaining doctoral degrees. But the trend shows variable rather than steady improvement. Between the two world wars—in 1920, 1930, and 1940—women received between 13 percent and 15 percent of all doctorates. That proportion dropped to 10 percent in 1950, and did not begin to rise until about 1970. Women earned 14 percent of all doctorates in 1970, and 23 percent in 1975. By 1980 women accounted for 28 percent of the doctoral degrees awarded (see figure 1, earlier).

These gains notwithstanding, sex differences prevail in field of study, full-time enrollment, and institutional affiliation of doctoral students. In 1981, nearly half of women's doctorates were in education or psychology, which accounted for 36 percent and 12 percent, respectively, of the doctorates received by women. Women's doctorates also clustered in literature, biological science, language, and certain social sciences (see table 2; Ekstrom 1979). Thus, women are being awarded doctorates in traditional female areas that are already glutted with Ph.D.s (Ekstrom 1979, 1). Males, on the other hand, are distributed over a larger number of fields and are more likely than women to be awarded degrees in business, engineering, physical science, and other technical fields—the growing and lucrative employment areas (see table 2).

Among minority women, the clustering of doctorates in female-typed fields is even more marked. Minority women are concentrated specifically in the field of education. Fully two-fifths of the doctorates awarded to Black women and half of those awarded to Hispanic women are in education (Astin 1982, 208).

Further, female graduate students are more likely to be enrolled in the less well funded public institutions and enrolled part-time rather than full-time (Randour, Strasburg, and Lipman-Blumen 1982, 194). These data suggest additional differences in the higher education of men and women. But to fully understand the disparate status of the sexes in American colleges and universities, we must look beyond simple enrollment data and trends to the experiences and socialization processes of male and female students.

Sex-Biased Processes in Higher Education

Even when men and women attend the same institution, occupy the same classrooms, and share the same teachers, women's educational experience differs from that of men (Association of American Colleges 1982). In faculty interaction with students, a "subtle and silent language" differentiates males and females (Association of American Colleges 1982). Studies indicate that, in their interactions with students, faculty encourage male compared to female students by making more eye contact with the men, nodding and gesturing in response to questions, assuming a position of attentiveness when men speak, and taking a location near male students (see Association of American Colleges 1982, 7; Thorne 1979). Observers frequently note that in classroom discussions, even the brightest female students tend to remain silent, while their male counterparts dominate (Sternglanz and Lyberger-Ficek 1977; Speizer 1982). Faculty members promote and reinforce the invisibility of female students by subtle practices such as calling directly on males but not females, addressing men by name more often than women, giving men more time to answer a question before going on to another student, interrupting women more frequently or allowing them to be interrupted, and crediting the contributions of male more often than female students (Association of American Colleges 1982). These practices convey nega-

TABLE 2 Distribution of doctoral degrees, by sex and discipline division, 1971 and 1980–81

Discipline division	Percentage of degrees awarded[a]			
	Women		Men	
	1971	1980–81	1971	1980–81
Agriculture and natural resources	(b)	1.2	3.8	4.1
Architecture and environmental design	(b)	0.2	(b)	0.3
Area studies	(b)	0.1	(b)	0.4
Biological sciences	13.0	10.3	11.1	11.7
Business and management	(b)	1.2	(b)	3.2
Communications	(b)	0.1	(b)	0.5
Computer and information sciences	(b)	(b)	(b)	0.1
Education	29.6	36.5	18.3	18.3
Engineering	(b)	1.0	13.1	10.8
Fine and applied arts	3.0	2.5	1.7	1.7
Foreign languages	6.4	3.1	1.7	1.2
Health professions	1.7	3.6	1.4	2.1
Home economics	1.6	1.6	(b)	(b)
Law	0.0	(b)	(b)	(b)
Letters	12.4	7.6	6.7	4.4
Library science	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
Mathematics	2.0	1.1	4.0	2.7
Physical sciences	5.3	3.7	15.0	12.2
Psychology	9.3	12.4	4.9	7.4
Public affairs and services	(b)	1.7	(b)	1.1
Social sciences	11.0	8.3	11.4	10.0
Theology	(b)	0.1	1.0	5.2
Interdisciplinary studies	(b)	1.1	(b)	0.1

Source: For 1971: National Center for Education Statistics, *Degrees Awarded to Women: 1979 Update* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1981), table 6. For 1980–81: National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics, 1983* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, forthcoming), table 107.

[a] Columns may not add to 100.0 percent because of rounding.

[b] Less than 0.5 percent.

tive messages about women's value and status in the classroom, and signal their exclusion as significant members of the college community. This, in turn, serves to depress women's intellectual development, undermine their confidence, and dampen their aspirations both in and out of school.

Such patterns are especially consequential for undergraduates, whose education is largely a formal classroom process. Graduate education, in contrast, is an informal process of interaction, socialization, and alliance. Yet men's and women's experiences are again very different. Not only do women see faculty members and research advisers much less frequently than do men (Holmstrom and Holmstrom 1974; Kjerulff and Blood 1973), but also their interactions and communications with the faculty are less relaxed and egalitarian (Kjerulff and Blood 1973). Women tend to regard themselves as students rather than colleagues of the faculty and report that they are taken less seriously than men (Holmstrom and Holmstrom 1974; see also Freeman 1979). In short, in graduate and professional education, women report that they are overlooked and neglected—especially outside of formal classroom proceedings. As one woman at Berkeley put it:

> Have I been overtly discriminated against? Probably no. Have I been encouraged, congratulated, received recognition, gotten a friendly hello, a solicitous "can I help you out?" The answer is no. Being a woman here just makes you tougher, work harder, and hope that if you get a 4.0 GPA, someone will say "You're good." [Quoted in Association of American Colleges 1982, 1.]

To understand the implications of this pattern, one must appreciate the pivotal consequences of faculty alliances in graduate education. For their favored students faculty members provide the research training and experience necessary for professional and intellectual development. They nominate preferred students for fellowships and awards and take stands for them in the perennial disputes surrounding qualifying examinations and degree requirements. They furnish professional visibility by introducing their protégés at meetings and conferences and by coauthoring papers and articles with them. Faculty selectively provide students the opportunity to pose important questions, solve problems, and set professional goals. Ultimately, faculty members help their favored students locate good jobs and place them on the road of career mobility.

Women's limited interaction with the faculty lessens their opportunities for advancement. This exclusion is not simply a function of overt discrimination. Rather, it is linked more subtly to the dominance of male culture and its control of higher education. Like other institutions in our society, academia is largely a male milieu. The male members have grown up together, played, learned, and competed together. They share certain language patterns, traditions, and understandings—in and out of the work setting (see Epstein 1970, 167–76; Epstein 1974). When male professionals choose protégés or apprentices, they look to fledglings in whom they can see a reflection of themselves. In such a system of mentor/protégé relations, women are "outsiders" and are rarely identified as successors of the males in control. Thus, in an organization based on sponsorship and support, women students tend to be isolates, left to struggle along on their own.

Of course, the presence of female faculty members and mentors can change the balance. One study reports a strong positive correlation between the proportion of female faculty members and the number of women students subsequently cited for achievement (Tidball 1973). Women Ph.D.s who had female dissertation advisers are reported to publish significantly more than women who had male advisers (Goldstein 1979). Moreover, since both men's and women's aspiration levels are a function of their real and perceived opportunities (Kanter 1977), the presence and availability of female mentors can broaden women's sense of possibilities (Faver, Fox and Shannon in press).

During the last decade, for undergraduate students, especially, women's studies programs have represented one major expression of the feminist movement on college campuses. In its course offerings and its research on women, the women's studies movement has helped correct scholarship's long-standing oversight of the study of women—their problems, activities, contributions, and domains. Feminist scholarship—promoted by the women's studies movement—has helped counter bias in the methods, conceptual schemes, and theories of academic study. In doing so, it has offered a broader, more thorough, and critical knowledge base for students and scholars. Nevertheless, in general, as discussed below, female faculty members are few, and thus female students generally lack the interaction, identification, and support that their presence would promote.

WOMEN AS FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

As faculty, women are segregated in the tasks they perform, the places they teach, the fields they occupy, and the ranks they hold. Across each dimension (task, place, field, position), women have lower rewards (Fox in press).

Female academics are located disproportionately in two-year and four-year state colleges—where teaching loads are heavy and administrative demands are high (see table 3). In fact, among full-time teaching faculty, almost 30 percent of the women teach thirteen or more hours a week, while only 15 percent of the men teach this much (Ekstrom 1979, 2). Women are concentrated in state colleges and satellite campuses, rather than in major universities with the research resources and opportunities that support the publication upon which academic eminence and recognition are based. At the top of the academic hierarchy, in the prestigious and powerful institutions that set the pace and dominate the standards of scholarly work, women can barely be found (see Graham 1978, 768).

Women are located not only in less prestigious schools but also in less powerful fields and disciplines. Academic men are concentrated in the sciences, social sciences, and professional schools. Women are clustered in the arts, humanities, and services associated with the more marginal areas of education, public health, and welfare (Fox 1981).

Moreover, the higher the rank, the fewer the women. Across fields and institutions, women are one-third of the assistant professors, but just one fifth of the associate professors, and only one-tenth of the full professors (see table 3). It is, instead, at the subprofessorial ranks that we find disproportionate concentrations of women, who are almost half of the faculty.

These subprofessorial appointments are marginal positions that fluctuate with enrollments, unexpected leaves of absence, and other departmental exigencies (see Hornig 1979; Van Arsdale 1978). Many of these appointments are part-time or part-year positions. For university administrators, appointing faculty to part-time and adjunct or temporary positions is a big benefit: it keeps salary levels down, avoids long-term commitments, and relieves the "regular" faculty of

TABLE 3 Women as a percentage of total full-time faculty, by institutional type and by rank, 1980–81

	Percentage female	
Institution and rank	9-month contracts	12-month contracts
Total	26.7	24.7
Institutional type		
Universities	19.4	16.6
Four-year colleges	26.8	25.6
Two-year colleges	36.4	35.7
Rank, across institutions		
Professor	10.6	7.8
Associate	20.6	18.8
Assistant	35.3	31.2
Instructor	52.8	46.2
Lecturer	46.5	45.3
No rank	36.1	35.9

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Faculty Salary, Tenure, and Benefits, 1980–81* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1981), tables 2.1, 2.4, p. 4.

tedious undergraduate courses. For the women who hold these positions, the costs are high: part-time and adjunct appointments rarely carry fringe benefits, they never provide leaves or sabbaticals, and they offer no security or chance for tenure. Further, because these faculty members are rarely represented by unions or professional associations, they are exempt from formal grievance procedures (Tuckman, Caldwell, and Volger 1978). Perhaps most critically, part-time, adjunct, and subprofessorial appointees are ineligible for outside research funding—which eliminates their chance to establish an independent scholarly record and obtain better prospects for themselves (Hornig 1979).

As university resources have dwindled and bugets have decreased, the number of part-time faculty in particular has grown dramatically. Between 1972 and 1977, for example, part-time faculty in four-year colleges increased by 40 percent while full-timers increased by less than 9 percent. In two-year colleges, the number of part-timers grew by a remarkable 80 percent (Tuckman, Caldwell, and Volger 1978, 185), and by 1976 part-timers comprised more than half (55.8 percent) of all faculty members in two-year colleges (Leslie, Kellams, and Gunne 1982, 19). Women hold a disproportionate number of part-time appointments in all institutions: 29 percent of the male instructional staff and 39 percent of the female staff in colleges and universities hold part-time appointments (National Center for Education Statistics 1981c, 105).

The growth in part-time, temporary, and subprofessorial appointments creates the possibility of a permanent, marginally employed faculty existing on the fringes of academic life (see Wilke 1979). These faculty members suffer from a humilating absence of status and indignities that range from denial of clerical help to exclusion from departmental meetings and isolation from contact with "regular" faculty (see Van Arsdale 1978). Because this class of marginal faculty is disproportionately female, it is an indication of, and blight on, the status of women in higher education.

Women's depressed status as faculty members is partially due to such factors as socialization, the constraints of family roles, and restrictive political and economic opportunity structures, which produce sex inequalities throughout the labor force. But women in higher education are also disadvantaged by particular features of the academic organization.

First, female faculty members, like female graduate students, are constrained by the male culture that dominates the academic institution. In this milieu, men share traditions, styles, and understandings about rules of competing, bartering, and succeeding. They accept one another, support one another, and promote one another. As outsiders to this male milieu, and its informal network of information and resources, women are shut off from job prospects, research information, and professional opportunities and services. As one women in science put it:

> Sooner or later I and those around me knew I was not one of the boys. Professional identification in the absence of colleague identification gets you only so far. When somewhere along the line the boys start boosting their buddies in a kind of "quid pro quo" competition, you realize you've had it. You don't have the "quo" for the "quid." You don't have any coattails, and everyone knows it. The shift may be subtle or it may come as a jolt, but it *does* come. In school, the boys took you more or less seriously because you got the highest grades in courses and helped them study for exams. But now that everyone has degree in hand, they don't need you anymore [Tidball 1974, 56–57].

Since the academic culture is not only male but also white, these problems are compounded for nonwhite women, who are disadvantaged in access to sponsorship, aid, information, and professional recognition.

Additionally, the normative standards of academic work create a bias in professional evaluation. In scholarly and scientific work, standards are both "absolute" and "subjective"; work is measured against a standard of absolute excellence, and this, in turn, is a subjective assessment. Thus, in academia, the evaluative criteria are vague; the process of appraisal is highly inferential; and the decisions for reward are largely judgmental.

In such a context stereotyped and sex-biased reactions abound. Studies indicate that the more loosely defined and subjective the criteria, the more likely it is that white males will be perceived and evaluated as the superior candidates, and that sex bias will operate (see Deux and Emswiller 1974; Nieva and Gutek 1980; Pheterson, Kiesler, and Goldberg 1980; Rosen and Jerdee 1974). In academia, conditions are prime for bias in recruitment, hiring, and promotion, and women are among the casualties of the system.

Although this bias is a violation of federal law, legal redress is a costly, emotionally debilitating, and discouraging process. Further, an irony of academic life is that scholars and scientists since childhood have counted on their individual achievement and performance to win them recognition and reward. As a group, they regard the rules of their work—the standards, evaluation, and rewards—as legitimate. Consequently, they tend to attribute failure to individual performance rather than institutional structure (Cole and Cole 1973, 254–59; Fox 1981, 82). This process of internal attribution is especially characteristic of women (see Frieze 1978). In this way, the norms of science and scholarship—with their emphasis on individual attainment and meritocratic reward—dampen collective alienation and reaction in academia.

Finally, women's disadvantaged status in academia is perpetuated by the very sex segregation that is an index of their subordination. Inequality in the status of the sexes is more tenable when it is less evident, and the segregation of men and women in different units, departments, and institutions makes their discrepant ranks and rewards less apparent and visible. This reduces potential strain and, in doing so, helps perpetuate the discrepant status of the sexes, without threatening academia's ideology of universalism and objectivity (Fox in press).

TITLE IX AND PROSPECTS FOR WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In 1972, Congress prohibited sex discrimination in higher education by adding Title IX to the Education Amendments Act. Its key stipulation states:

> No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance [20 U.S.C. §1681].

Because colleges and universities receive federal assistance in grants, contracts, loan programs, and student aid, the act applies to higher education along with elementary and secondary education. Title IX covers employment in education as well as almost every aspect of student life. Thus, the act prohibits sex discrimination in admissions to educational institutions (except admissions to private and single-sex institutions); curricular and extracurricular programs; student services and benefits such as counseling, health care, and financial aid; and job access and promotion within educational agencies and institutions.

With this mandate, Title IX has altered the most obvious and blatant discriminatory practices in higher education, especially in admissions. As late as the 1960s and early 1970s, women were subject to highly inequitable quota and admissions standards in colleges and universities. At Cornell University's College of Agriculture, for example, women were admitted to the program only if they had SAT scores 30 to 40 points higher than those of the entering men; at Pennsylvania State University, a male applicant was five times more likely to be accepted than a female; and at the University of North Carolina, admission of female students was restricted by policies that required women to live in a small number of dormitories, while men could live off campus (National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs 1981, 25). Title IX has eliminated the most flagrant of these practices—at least on the formal level.

Yet the area in which Title IX has been most acutely seen and felt is athletics. Before Title IX, female athletes were a rarity on American college campuses. Men dominated the playing fields, courts, and pools; they won the scholarships and awards; and they obtained public attention and acclaim. The few female athletes, in contrast, struggled along without facilities, funding, or rewards. With Title IX, however, women's participation in college athletics has greatly expanded.

Critical to this participation has been the increase in budgets for women's athletic programs. In 1974, the average budget for men's athletic programs was twenty-two times the size of the women's. In 1979, it was five times larger—a considerable sex difference, but also a substantial reduction in the disparity. At Big Ten schools, for example, the athletic budget for women averaged only $3,500 annually in 1974. It increased to a range of $250,000 to $750,000 in 1978 (National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs 1981, 45).

With these budgetary increases, athletic scholarships have become available to women. Thus, while only 60 colleges offered athletic scholarships to women in 1974, 500 schools did so in 1981. These scholarships give female athletes opportunities that have long been available to males. In the case of golfer Nancy Lopez, it has been said:

> Nancy is a partial result of Title IX . . . requiring universities expecting federal aid to provide equal opportunity. . . . Lopez was offered a golf scholarship by the University of Tulsa, something that wouldn't have existed without Title IX. The money was a major break for Nancy, considering that [her father] couldn't dredge up enough to support a golfer in college [National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs 1981, 46].

Large disparities still exist in scholarship expenditures. But, whereas in 1973 women received only 14 percent of all scholarships within the two major athletic associations, in 1981, women comprised 30 percent of the athletes and 22 percent of the scholarship recipients within these associations (National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs 1981, 46).

Title IX has had limited impact beyond athletics and formal discrimination in admissions, however. It has not reduced the informal sources of bias in higher education. To alleviate these, one pivotal step would be an increase in the female faculty, especially at the higher ranks. The presence and availability of female faculty members would broaden women's aspirations, increase their opportunities for interaction with the faculty, and, most critically, reduce the male dominance of educational practices and processes.

Yet, with the demise of affirmative action programs in the university and with low public demand for redress of sex discrimination, women have not increased their proportions on the faculty—particularly tenured faculty—in higher education. Instead, they remain few in number and continue to be clustered at the subprofessorial ranks (National Center for Education Statistics 1980), where they have limited influence and visibility as role models or agents for change.

Finally, while Title IX may be one factor in the increased female enrollments in higher education, it has had limited effect on the segregation of male and female students into different areas of study. Women continue to be limited especially in technical and scientific training, and this has profound consequences for their occupational options. Women are diverted from taking the high school math courses that constitute the critical "filter" necessary for education in 75 percent of all college and university majors, including the business, medicine, science, engineering, and architecture programs (Sells 1974), which lead to higher paying jobs. To correct these patterns, schools must make clear to students the occupational consequences of both technical and nontechnical preparation and, moreover, remove the barriers that surround numbers, logic, and problem solving as male domains.

As an act for sex equity in education, Title IX has provided a broad mandate. But legislation lives and dies by its enforcement, not its mandate (Scott 1974, 402). To achieve sex equity in education, we must confront the practices that track men and women into different curricular areas and socialize them for different occupations. Such action requires effective monitoring, strong enforcement, and firm sanctions for noncompliance with policies of sex equity. This demands the awareness, support, and effort of political institutions. Through institutional action we can help break the educational patterns and processes that restrict women's options and constrain their possibilities throughout work and society.

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INGE POWELL BELL

The double standard: Age

There is a reason why women are coy about their age. For most purposes, society pictures them as "old" ten or fifteen years sooner than men. Nobody in this culture, man or woman, wants to grow old; age is not honored among us. Yet women must endure the specter of aging much sooner than men, and this cultural definition of aging gives men a decided psychological, sexual, and economic advantage over women.

It is surely a truism of our culture that, except for a few kinky souls, the inevitable physical symptoms of aging make women sexually unattractive much earlier than men. The multi-million-dollar cosmetics advertising industry is dedicated to creating a fear of aging in women, so that it may sell them its emollients of sheep's fat, turtle sweat, and synthetic chemicals, which claim, falsely, to stem the terrible tide. "Did you panic when you looked into the mirror this morning and noticed that those laugh lines are turning into crow's-feet?" "Don't let your eyes speak your age!" "What a face-lift can do for your morale!"

A man's wrinkles will not define him as sexually undesirable until he reaches his late fifties. For him, sexual value is defined much more in terms of personality, intelligence, and earning power than physical appearance. Women, however, must rest their case largely on their bodies. Their ability to attain status in other than physical ways and to translate that status into sexual attractiveness is severely limited by the culture. Indeed, what status women have is based almost entirely on their sexuality. The young girl of eighteen or twenty-five may well believe that her position in society is equal to, or even higher than that of men. As she approaches middle age, however, she begins to notice a change in the way people treat her. Reflected in the growing indifference of others toward her looks, toward her sexuality, she can see and measure the decline of her worth, her status in the world. In Simone de Beauvoir's words:

> she has gambled much more heavily than man on the sexual values she possesses; to hold her husband and to assure herself of his protection, and to keep most of her jobs, it is necessary for her to be attractive, to please; she is allowed no hold on the world save through the mediation of some man. What is to become of her when she no longer has any

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> hold on him: This is what she anxiously asks herself while she helplessly looks on the degeneration of this fleshly object which she identifies with herself.

The middle-aged woman who thickly masks her face with makeup, who submits to surgical face and breast lifting, who dyes her hair and corsets her body is as much a victim of socially instilled self-hatred as the black person who straightens his hair and applies bleaching creams to his skin.

The most dramatic institutionalization of different age definitions for men and women is the cultural rules governing the age at which one can marry. It is perfectly acceptable for men to marry women as much as fifteen or twenty years younger than they are, but it is generally unacceptable for them to marry women more than four or five years older. These cultural rules show up very plainly in the marriage statistics gathered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. At the time of first marriage the age differential is relatively small; the groom is on the average 1.8 years older than his bride. When widowers remarry, however, the gap is 6.5 years; and when divorced men do, the gap is 3.9 years.

These age differentials put the woman at a disadvantage in several ways. First, whatever may be the truth about age and sexual performance, our culture defines the young as sexually more vigorous and desirable. Thus, the customary age differential means that the man gets the more desirable partner; the woman must settle for the less desirable.

More important, the divorced or widowed woman is severely handicapped when it comes to finding another marital partner. Let us take, for example, a couple who divorce when both are in their thirties. What is the difference in the supply of future marriage partners for the man and for the woman? The man can choose among all women his own age or younger. This includes all those women below twenty-five, many more of whom are as yet unmarried. The woman, by contrast, is limited by custom to men her own age or older. She has access only to age brackets in which most people are married. She is thus reduced to the supply of men who come back on the marriage market as a result of divorce or widowerhood or to those few who have not yet married. It is easy to see which of the two will have an easier time finding companionship or a marriage partner. It is also easy to surmise that the awareness of this difference makes divorce a much more painful option for women than for men and thus puts many women at a continuous disadvantage within a strained marriage.

Statistics bear out our supposition that women have a harder time remarrying than men (see table 1). It has been estimated that, while three-quarters of divorced men remarry, only two-thirds of divorced women ever do.

Only a small proportion of this discrepancy is due to the shorter life expectancy of men and thus their relative scarcity in the upper age brackets. For example, in 1980 in the age bracket forty-five to sixty-four, there are 2½ times as many widowed and divorced women without mates as comparable men. Yet in the total population the ratio of women to men in that age bracket is only 1.1 to 1. In the over sixty-five age bracket there are over five times as many divorced and widowed women still alone as comparable men; yet in the population as a whole, the ratio of women to men in this age bracket is only 1.5 to 1.

TABLE 1 Remarriage of widowed and divorced men and women by age group, 1979

Age and marital status	Number of marriages per 1,000	
	Women	Men
Widowed		
45–64	13.6	60.6
65 and over	2.6	19.9
Divorced		
25–44	135.2	224.1
45–64	35.1	92.8
65 and over	7.4	23.3

Still, the difference in life expectancy between the two sexes does work to a woman's disadvantage in another way. The gentleman in the ad below is making explicit an expectation made implicitly by most men:

> RECENTLY DIVORCED, 53, affectionate, virile, tall, good-looking, yearns for the one utterly feminine, loving woman in her 30s, 40s with whom he can share a beautiful new life.

At age fifty, this gentleman had a life expectancy of twenty-three more years. (It is a little less now.) If he finds a woman of thirty-five, her life expectancy will be 41.27 more years. In other words, he is affectionately offering her a statistical chance of eighteen years of widowhood. And she will be widowed at an age when men of her own age will be looking for women in their thirties and forties. At best, he may live to a ripe old age. When he is seventy-five she will be fifty-seven.

Now let us consider the case of a much larger group: women who have husbands. As middle age approaches, many of these married women find that they, too, are vulnerable to the difficulties posed by the different definitions of age in men and women. For them, however devoutly they may wish it as they tidy their homes, take care of their teenage children, or play bridge, sexual adventure is usually out of the question. This is not just because of the more restrictive mores that bind them to fidelity; their age has already disqualified them for anything else. Not so for the husband. If he is a successful man, his virility will be seen as still intact, if not actually enhanced, and the affair becomes very much the question. Indeed, if he is engaged in a middle-class occupation, he is almost inevitably surrounded by attractive, young females, many of whom—the receptionist, the cocktail waitress at the downtown bar, and the airplane hostess—have been deliberately selected to flatter his ego and arouse his fancy. In addition, many of the women hired to fulfill more ordinary functions—the secretaries, typists, and the like—find the older man desirable by virtue of his success and wealth. Thus, the middle-aged wife, unless she is one of the statistically few whose husband is truly happy and faithful, is put into competition with the cards stacked against her. And even if her husband doesn't leave her for a younger woman or begin having affairs, she will probably experience anxiety and a sense of diminished self-esteem.

The mass media glamorize and legitimate the older man–younger woman relationship. Successful actors continue to play romantic leads well into their fifties and sometimes sixties (*vide* Cary Grant). Frequently they are cast opposite actresses at least half their age, and the story line rarely even acknowledges the difference. They are simply an "average" romantic couple. The question of whether the twenty-year-old heroine is out of her mind to marry the greying fifty-five-year-old hero isn't even raised.

THE PRESTIGE LOSS

Occupation is man's major role, unemployment or failure in his occupational life the worst disaster than can befall him. The question "What do you do?" is seldom answered, "Well, I'm married and a father." But because men draw their self-esteem and establish their connections to others very largely through their jobs, retirement is a time of psychic difficulty and discomfort for most men. The woman faces a similar role loss much earlier. Her primary role in life is that of mother: her secondary role is that of homemaker, and her tertiary role that of sexual partner. We have already seen that the role of sexual partner, and sexually desirable object, is impaired for many women as middle age approaches. Now we must contemplate the additional fact that the woman's primary role—that of mother—also disappears during middle age.

Indeed, with decreasing family size and increasingly common patterns of early marriage, women are losing their mother role much earlier than formerly. In 1890 the average woman took care of children until her mid-fifties. Today most women see their children leave home when they are in their late forties. Whereas in 1890 the average woman lived thirty years after her last child had entered school and twelve years after her last child married, today, with longer life expectancy, the average woman lives forty years after her last child enters school and twenty-five years after her last child marries. Thus, women lose their major role long before the retirement age arrives for men.

Loss of sexual attractiveness and the maternal role comes at a time when the husband is likely to be at the peak of his career and deeply involved in satisfying job activities. Bernice Neugarten, in describing how people become aware of middle age, says:

> Women, but not men, tend to define their age status in terms of timing of events within the family world, and even unmarried career women often discuss middle age in terms of the family they might have had. . . .
>
> Men, on the other hand, perceive the onset of middle age by cues presented outside the family context, often from the deferential behavior accorded them in the work setting. One man described the first time a younger associate helped open a door for him; another, being called by his official title by a newcomer in the company; another, the first time he was ceremoniously asked for advice by a younger man.

Little research has been done on the prestige accorded men and women in different age brackets. The few studies available point to older women as the lowest prestige group in society. In a projective test asking middle-aged persons to make up a story about a picture which showed a young couple and a middle-aged couple in conversation, Neugarten found that the older woman was seen as more uncomfortable in her role than any of the others and was the only figure who was described as often in negative as in positive terms. Mary Laurence found that respondents tended to rate women as having more undesirable personality traits than men through all age ranges, but the age group rated most severely was women over forty.

A study of characters in American magazine fiction from 1890 to 1955 found a decline in the number of older women appearing as characters. By 1955 there were none at all. The middle-aged woman almost never sees herself and her problems depicted in print or on the screen. When they are, she sees mostly negative stereotypes. Her dilemma is very similar to that of the black ghetto child who finds in the "Dick and Jane" first reader a world that is irrelevant at best, invidious at worst. To have oneself and one's experiences verified in the mythology and art of one's culture is a fundamental psychological need at every stage of the life cycle.

Women's own attitudes toward aging are shown in the interesting finding that, in the listings of the Directory of the American Psychological Association, women are ten times as likely to omit their age as men. Thus, even professional women, who presumably have roles that extend undamaged into middle age, are much more likely than men to feel that their advancing age is a serious impairment.

On the question of whether middle-aged women are actually unhappier or more maladjusted than middle-aged men, the evidence is conflicting and inconclusive. A few studies by various researchers found little or no difference between middle-aged and old men and women on such factors as personality change, engagement with life, and reported satisfaction with life. One study found older women more satisfied than older men.

One problem with these efforts, though, is that some of them lump together the middle-aged group with persons past retirement age. Some of the findings may therefore be due to the fact that the retirement age is far more stressful and acute for men than for women. Women have never invested much in careers and have been adjusting to role loss for many years. In old age an additional factor works in favor of women. Women are closer to relatives and thus more sheltered from complete isolation.

The studies present another problem in that the respondents themselves judged how happy or satisfied they were. The trouble with this is that subordinated groups learn to expect less and therefore to be satisfied with less. A middle-aged woman whose husband has had several affairs may report that her marriage has been satisfying because society has taught her to expect infidelity from her husband. A man whose wife had behaved in similar fashion would be less likely to regard his marriage as satisfying. Indeed, social conditioning would probably dictate a more painful crisis for the cuckolded husband. Moreover, measuring the satisfaction levels of people who are already so thoroughly "socialized" doesn't take into account the wife's feelings the first time she saw her own mother experience such treatment from her father and realized that a similar fate was in store for herself. It does not measure the emotional cost of adjusting to the expectation of abuse. In fact, if we were to confine our evidence to degrees of self-reported satisfaction, we might conclude that a great variety of social inequities create no emotional hardships for the subjugated.

THE ECONOMIC LOSS

Discrimination against older women in employment is important because of the large number of people affected. The number of older women in the labor force has grown rapidly since World War II. By 1981, 61.1 percent of women in the age range of forty-five to fifty-four and 41.4 percent of those fifty-five to sixty-four were employed. These percentages had risen sharply from 1940, when they were 24.5 percent and 18 percent respectively.

Discrimination against older workers of both sexes in industry is well documented. A 1965 Department of Labor survey concluded that half the job openings in the private economy are closed to applicants over fifty-five years of age, and one-fourth are closed to applicants over forty-five. Women are particularly disadvantaged by this discrimination because, as a result of their typical work and child-rearing cycle, many women come back on the labor market after a long period of absence (and are perhaps entering the market for the first time) during precisely these years. There is very little evidence on the question of whether older women are relatively more disadvantaged than older men. Edwin Lewis states that age is a greater detriment to women than to men but cites no evidence. A Department of Labor publication on age discrimination in employment claims that men are slightly favored, but the evidence is very incomplete. The study found that, compared to the percentage of unemployed older men and women, women were hired in somewhat greater numbers. But unemployment rates are based on self-reporting and are notoriously influenced by the optimism of a given group about the prospects of finding employment. Older women, many of whom are married, are less likely to report themselves as seeking work if they are pessimistic about the possibilities of getting any. The study also surveyed the employment practices of 540 firms and found that, although differences were slight, men were disadvantaged in a larger number of occupational categories. But in clerical work, in which 31.5 percent of women over forty-five are engaged, discrimination against women was decidedly greater.

The problem of discrimination against older men and women is complicated by the fact that a study would take into account whether discrimination was practiced because of expected lack of physical strength, long training or internship programs, or physical attractiveness. The former two considerations figure much more frequently in the case of men and certainly have more legitimacy as grounds for discriminating than the factor of physical attractiveness, which usually arises solely because the woman is seen as a sex object before she is seen as a productive worker. As long as this is the employer's orientation, it will probably do little good to cite him the studies proving that middle-aged women office workers are superior to young women in work attendance, performance, and ability to get along agreeably with others. It would also be necessary to see how much relative discrimination there is within occupational categories. There is little discrimination in certain low-paid, undesirable jobs because the supply of workers in these categories is short. Women tend to be predominantly clustered in precisely these job categories.

A check of one Sunday's *Los Angeles Times* prior to 1970 when want ads were segregated by sex yielded a count of 1,067 jobs advertised for women and 2,272 advertised for men. For both sexes, specific upper age limits or the term *young* was attached to less than 1 percent of the job listings, and there was almost no difference between men and women. However, 97 (or 9 percent) of the female ads used the term *girl* or *gal,* while only 2 of the 2,272 male ads used the term *boy.*

To check out my hunch that *girl* is an indirect way of communicating an age limitation, in a state where discrimination by age is illegal, I called five employment agencies in southern California and asked an interviewer who handles secretarial and clerical placement what he or she thought the term *girl* meant from the employer's side and how it would be interpreted by the average job seeker. Four of the five employment interviewers stated that the term definitely carries an age connotation for employer and job seeker alike. They defined the age implied variously as "under thirty"; "under thirty-five—if we were looking in the thirty-five to forty-five category we would use the term 'mature'; over forty-five we don't say anything"; "It means a youngster. I certainly don't think a forty-five-year-old would go in if she saw that ad"; "It does mean age, which is why we always use the term 'women' in our company's ads (although we may use the term 'girl' on a specific listing)." The last person would not state a specific age because she was obviously worried about being caught in violation of the law, to which she frequently alluded. Only one of the five replied in the negative, saying "to me 'girl' is just another word for 'woman.' You can hardly use the term 'woman' in the wording of an ad." Everyone I questioned agreed that the term *girl Friday* (a tiny proportion of our cases) carries no age connotation. Several, however, mentioned that the terms *trainee, recent high school grad,* and *high school grad* were used to communicate an age limitation.

Along with the term *girl,* a number of ads use physical descriptions—almost entirely lacking in men's ads. "Attractive gal for receptionist job" is typical. More specific are the following excerpts from the columns in the *Los Angeles Times;* "Exciting young atty seeks a sharp gal who wants a challenge"; "Young, dynamic contractor who is brilliant but disorganized needs girl he can depend on completely"; and one headlined "Lawyer's Pet" which goes on to say "Looking for a future: want challenge, 'variety,' $$$? Young attorney who handles all phases of 'law' will train you to become his 'right hand.' " Few women over thirty would consider themselves qualified to apply for these jobs.

The use of the term *girl* and the reaction of one employment agency interviewer who considered this the only proper way to connote *woman* in a want ad underscore the extent to which women's jobs are still considered young girls' jobs, that is, the relatively unimportant work that a girl does before she gets married. One employment agency interviewer stated that his agency frequently had requests for a certain age level because companies want to keep the age range in a certain department homogeneous for the sake of congeniality. It is significant that he mentioned only the "twenties" or "thirties" as examples of such desirable age ranges.

One is tempted to make a comparison between the term *girl* and the insulting racist use of *boy* for all blacks, regardless of age. In both cases, the term indicates that the species under discussion is not considered capable of full adulthood. In both cases, blacks and women are acceptable and even likable when very old, as *uncle* and *grandmother*, but somehow both are anachronistic as mature adults.

Given the scarcity and conflicting nature of the data, it is impossible to say with certainty that older women suffer more from discrimination than older men. The question certainly merits further and more systematic exploration.

CASTE AND CLASS

The division of this article into sexual, prestige, and economic losses was taken from John Dollard's analysis of the sexual, prestige, and economic gains of whites at the expense of blacks in his classic study, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*. The choice was not an accident; speakers for women's liberation have often drawn heavily on the analogy between the problems of blacks and those of women. Yet equally often one hears objections to the analogy. Blacks are, as a group, isolated in the lowest economic strata and physically ghettoed into the worst parts of town, while women, being inextricably connected to men through familial ties, do not share a drastic, common disability. It has also been suggested that to compare the plight of women with that of blacks is to belittle the importance of the need for black liberation. Most of these critics care as little for black liberation as for the liberation of women and need not be taken seriously.

Yet the intellectual objections to the analogy should be discussed. The argument actually rests on the assumption that middle-class status cushions all of life's shocks and that middle-class women are always comfortably embedded in middle-class primary groups. It assumes further that the woes of lower-class women are all essentially class-connected rather than specifically sex-connected. The loneliness of widowhood, the anguish of a woman losing her husband to a younger woman, the perplexity of the woman whose children have left home and who finds herself unwanted on the labor market—these are real hurts, and they go deep, even in the middle class. Further, the notion of the individual as being deeply rooted in primary groups certainly reflects a partial and outmoded view in a highly individualistic society where the nuclear family, usually the only long-lasting primary group, has become extremely unstable. In our society, men and women are expected to get through life essentially alone. This is true even of the woman who is able to maintain good family ties throughout her life. It is even truer for those who suffer the more common fate of having these ties weakened by discord or severed by death or separation. For the lower-class woman, of course, these difficulties are harsher and more unrelieved, but in every class the woman must bear them alone.

The differential definition of age in men and women represents a palpable advantage to men at the expense of women. It multiplies the options for emotional satisfaction on a man's side while it diminishes them on a woman's. It raises his prestige and self-esteem at the expense of hers. All men in our society benefit to some degree from this custom, while not a single woman who lives into middle age escapes bearing some of the cost. If we are ever to restructure this society into one of true equality for both sexes, this is one of the crucial points at which we must begin.

LOIS M. GREENWOOD-AUDANT

The internalization of powerlessness: A case study of the displaced homemaker

There is something about being married. You invent this structure for yourself. You think you are on a real solid foundation. You think you are a pillar of the community or something—somebody that can be counted on. There are all sorts of walls, floors, and ceilings. It just seems so solid.

When I was divorced, I moved and my youngest child had gone away. I had this recurring dream that was a nightmare for me. I shop at a big Safeway. In my dream, each parking place was identified by a metal archway—there was a definite place where you parked. I became my car and drove down to the Safeway and they had sawed all these things off. There was this enormous parking lot and you could park wherever you wanted. There was no way to know where you were supposed to park.

For me, this epitomized my feelings that all my structures were stripped away and no one cared. I could park wherever I wanted! I felt like Sartre's expression, "condemned to freedom."

Pat O'Hara, displaced homemaker[1]

Condemned to freedom—this is a paradoxical sentiment to have in a society where freedom and individualism are so highly valued. Yet, this woman is not alone with her dilemma. She is one of an estimated 3 million to 5 million displaced homemakers in the United States today.[2] Displaced homemakers are the traditional mothers of America before their displacement. They are typically

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women over the age of thirty-five, who have worked in the home as mothers and homemakers and relied on others for financial support. Due to separation, divorce, widowhood, or the coming of age of their children, they have lost that financial support from husbands or from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Displaced homemakers do not fit into any standard governmental classifications, and, therefore, their problems generally have been unacknowledged, their numbers are only approximations. Their dilemma often is thought to arise mainly within middle-class families where husbands can afford to support women in the home who are not bringing in outside incomes. However, displaced homemakers are found among all social classes—the working class, the poor, and the upper class—as well as among all races and ethnic groups.[3] A key identifying factor of displaced homemakers is that they view themselves primarily as mothers and homemakers, and they have not had the experience of steady work in the labor market. The result is that, when they lose their financial support for being homemakers, they face extremely limited opportunites in the marketplace. They face triple jeopardy of discrimination: because they are women, because they have been homemakers, and because they are older. When they are also from a minority group, they face a fourth jeopardy of racial or ethnic discrimination. No matter what status they held while married, they drop significantly in socioeconomic status when their marriages end. As one study points out, 25 percent of white families becomes poor after marital disruption; 40 percent of those poor families become relatively poor. For black women, the situation is worse: 55 percent to 60 percent become poor, and 70 percent become relatively poor.[4]

Some may argue that the displaced homemaker's predicament may not be typical of the inequities women face at a time when 52.8 percent of all women sixteen years and over are participating in the labor force.[5] What makes a study of displaced homemakers meaningful in this regard is that these are women in transition from a life defined by traditional sex roles to a life that necessitates self-support and independence. Displaced homemakers are struggling to bridge the gap between work in the home and work in the marketplace, between life in the private world of the family and life in the public sphere of economics and politics. In this way, they can help us to understand a predicament common to many women. Their story highlights the dilemmas, inequities, and disparities that result from a sexual division of labor that assigns to women the primary role of child rearing and homemaking. As long as women are expected to carry primary responsibility for child rearing, most women will be influenced by this expectation and by the experience.

Although entering the labor market is a challenging task for any woman, it is particularly so for displaced homemakers, because they seldom have many options or any preparation for their new circumstances. They usually enter when they are suffering emotional and economic upheaval. They move abruptly from dependence or interdependence to being alone, and they need jobs that pay a living wage. They have to cope with financing, housing, food, clothing, transportation, as well as with getting an education and job training.

They comprise a vulnerable segment of this nation's unemployed and, in fact, are worse off than most of the unemployed because there are few legal or institutional resources to support them. They face continuing discrimination in employment because they are older and have no recent paid work experience. They are ineligible for unemployment insurance because they have been engaged in unpaid labor in the home. They are ineligible for old age benefits because they are too young, and many will never qualify for Social Security because they were divorced from the family wage earner too early. They have often lost their rights as beneficiaries under their husbands' employer's pension and health plans, and they are generally unacceptable to private health insurance plans because of their age.[6] This litany of ineligibilities underscores the point made by the original proponents of displaced homemakers legislation that "these are women who fall between the cracks of our society."[7]

These women face grave obstacles to economic self-sufficiency, and they have every right to feel frustrated about their situations. However, there is more to their dilemma than these structurally imposed obstacles. Most of the women also feel powerless about their own ability to do something worthwhile after their marriages have ended. They suffer tremendous feelings of self-doubt, lack of self-confidence, and low self-esteem. Their feelings of powerlessness seem to go deeper than the feelings people generally experience when they face a life crisis such as death of a spouse, divorce, or obstacles to their advancement. Their feelings of helplessness or powerlessness pervade their lives whether they are white or black, middle class or working class.

I became aware of this phenomenon while conducting participant-observation fieldwork at the first displaced homemaker center established in the country, in Oakland, California. As I sat in the center listening to workshop leaders encourage the women to focus on areas of power in their lives, I heard them persistently discount their strengths and emphasize their weaknesses. The women said they found it difficult to organize their lives to take positive steps toward self-sufficiency. They would talk on the telephone to friends for hours. They would stay in bed late into the morning. They felt unable to start the day until after their morning coffee or the "Today Show." They could not look for a job until they had had their teeth fixed or bought new clothes. They said they would start out as soon as they got the house organized, when they finished their diets, or after the last child had left home. They responded to suggestions for action with, "Yes, but. . . . " They went to job interviews feeling they weren't wanted—and, sure enough, they weren't. Many women openly admitted that "dependence was comfortable," even though there were costs. They found it hard to make decisions when no one shared the responsibility. They found it hard to give up needing someone else and hard to face doing it alone.

During the four years that the Oakland Displaced Homemakers Center had been in operation, the staff had found that the majority of women coming for help experienced significant problems with powerlessness, reflected in feelings of low self-esteem and lack of self-reliance. These problems often inhibited the women from becoming job-ready and from actively seeking a job.[8]

These findings were substantiated by a national study of forty-seven displaced homemaker demonstration projects across the country funded by the U.S. Department of Labor under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act

(CETA): The most frequently mentioned problem of displaced homemakers was a lack of self-esteem or self-confidence.[9] The study reported that the problem was the women's fears that they were incapable or not good enough.[10]

To investigate the causes of these feelings of helplessness, low self-esteem, and powerlessness that incapacitated displaced homemakers, I conducted forty in-depth interviews with displaced homemakers who had applied for services at the Oakland Displaced Homemakers Center.[11] These included life histories of the women, from childhood and family background through marriage and homemaking experiences to displacement crisis and current status.

The interview sample was randomly selected from applicants who sought service at the Oakland center in late 1978 and early 1979. I intentionally sought women who were removed from their marriages for at least one year, to mitigate the possibility that feelings of powerlessness were a result of an immediate life crisis. The women had ended their marriages an average of 6.7 years before the interview. Of these women, 75 percent were separated or divorced and 25 percent were widowed; half were working class and half middle class;[12] 75 percent were white and 25 percent were black. They ranged from forty to fifty-eight years of age. Since the end of their marriages, the women had tended to sustain themselves with some income support from their former husbands, accumulated savings from sales of their houses, life insurance in the case of widows, or other limited means of income. The center staff noted that the women often did not seek assistance until they had "spent down" to near poverty level and were beginning to panic about how they would support themselves.

POWER AND POWERLESSNESS: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Power may be defined as the ability to exercise control or direct change despite resistance.[13] Powerlessness is the inability to do so. There are objective and subjective dimensions to power. The objective dimension is access to and command over resources that contribute to people's ability to control circumstances and overcome resistance. These resources include cash, credit, wealth, or jobs; access to legitimacy, popularity, or status; control over sources of information; and control over physical force.[14] Usually the study of power concerns itself with these objective factors.

However, there is also a subjective dimension to power. People's motivation to achieve power is influenced by their belief in their ability to do so; this, in turn, is influenced by their level of self-esteem. As achievement motivation studies have shown, people do not try to achieve unless they have some reasonable belief in their ability to succeed. This same analysis applies to power.[15] If people feel capable and worthy, they will assert themselves. Low self-esteem leads to feelings of incompetence and lack of confidence in the ability to achieve. A person with low self-esteem sets lower goals and still feels incapable of meeting them.[16]

Objective conditions of power or powerlessness influence an individual's subjective feeling of power. In turn, a subjective belief in the ability to be powerful encourages an individual's efforts to gain access to and control over objective resources. An individual with little or no control over money, legitimacy, information, or force is likely to feel powerless and incompetent. At the same time, an individual with low self-confidence is likely to be discouraged from seeking the objective resources of power. Powerlessness becomes internalized when structural constraints (the objective conditions) are translated into psychological constraints (the subjective feelings) through mediating experiences. My study of displaced homemakers identified three significant mediators of the internalization process: gender identity formation, work in the home (thus financial dependence), and social norms.[17] How these mediate internalization of powerlessness will be discussed in greater detail below.

This concept illuminates why powerless groups may participate in their own subordination. If they have internalized their objective reality, they may feel unable to overcome the objective obstacles that prevent them from controlling their lives. As Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire has argued, in order to free themselves, the disadvantaged must challenge their very self-definition as well as their objective disadvantages.[18] It is a difficult task, since it requires giving up known definitions and relationships to start anew. Such a task requires an inner strength, which is undermined by the social structures the disadvantaged are struggling against. James Baldwin expressed this problem articulately in describing his own expatriation to Europe:

> In America, the color of my skin had stood between myself and me; in Europe, that barrier was down. Nothing is more desirable than to be released from an affliction, but nothing is more frightening than to be divested of a crutch. It turned out that the question of who I was, was not solved because I had removed myself from the social forces which menaced me—anyway, these forces had become interior and I had dragged them across the ocean with me. The question of who I was had at last become a personal question, and the answer was to be found in me.[19]

Feelings of powerlessness can be an adaptive response to an objective reality. To act as if one has power when one doesn't can be an invitation to further oppression. The need to struggle against powerlessness occurs when the objective conditions that created and reinforced it allow some possibility of enacting change. But this is when the internalization of powerlessness is most debilitating. It can penetrate people's self-definition to the point that they not only feel powerless but also identify with powerless behavior. This inhibits them from successfully challenging and overcoming their disadvantage.

POWERLESSNESS IN DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS

The objective social factor creating powerlessness among displaced homemakers is the division of labor by sex, which prescribes that women are primarily responsible for child rearing and homemaking. This limits women's access to the resources that bring social power and contributes to their feelings of personal powerlessness in the public domain. The division of labor by sex generates certain mediators that translate the objective reality of powerlessness into a subjective reality: (1) gender identity formation, (2) the personal experience of work in the home, which creates financial dependence on others, and (3) social norms and values that evolve from the experience of work in the home. These conditions influence a homemaker's subjective experience by influencing, respectively, (1) her self-image, (2) her behavior, and (3) her attitudes.

My study found that the major cause of powerlessness in displaced homemakers is dependence—both objective, structurally imposed dependence and subjective, psychologically felt dependence. This dependence develops with gender identity formation; it is reinforced by the women's reliance on their husbands for economic support and by their sex-defined work role in the home. It affects them subjectively by influencing their self-image, behavior, and attitudes so that they often feel incapable of directing change in their lives.

Note that this study is concerned with displaced homemakers' powerlessness vis-à-vis the public domain—the world of the labor market. These women had significant strengths and often felt powerful within the private sphere of the home. But the domestic sphere is isolated from and subordinate to the public sphere, and the identity, behavior, and values that are so functional within the home do not always translate successfully into the marketplace. This lack of transferability of strength leads to experiences of dependence. As long as the women objectively are dependent and subjectively feel dependent, they are unable to assert themselves fully in the public domain.

A major debate often centers around whether objective or subjective factors are more important in perpetuating powerlessness. Simply put, do women set themselves up for failure? Or does society set women up for failure? My analysis suggests that it is too simple to blame only the individual or only the system. The truth lies in the interaction between the two. I have found that a primary cause of powerlessness for women lies in a *structure* of inequality that generates a debilitating *psychological effect*. The psychological effect of powerlessness, in turn, can reinforce the objective structure of powerlessness, thus serving as a secondary cause.

In the following discussion, I draw on the experiences of the displaced homemakers I interviewed to illustrate how the three mediators derived from the sexual division of labor—gender identity formation, work in the home and concomitant financial dependence, and the social norms of homemaking work—translate objective conditions of powerlessness into subjective ones, i.e., how powerlessness is internalized. Although the examples drawn from the women's life histories represent particular points in time, each mediator operates throughout much of a woman's lifetime.

Gender Identity Formation

Traditionally, the father is the primary wage earner and the mother is the primary nurturer of their children. This has psychological ramifications for both girls and boys.[20] During the early years of life, girls do not differentiate their identity from their mothers as much as boys do. Because boys are almost exclusively nurtured by the opposite gender, they define themselves through differentiation.[21]

Because a girl continues to rely on and identify with her mother—her original source of nurturance—for affirmation of her being, she develops a dependence on that relationship for affirmation of her worth, approval, and love. As she grows, she extends this reliance to significant others, especially her father, boyfriend, and husband.[22] Consequently, a girl learns to be nice and pleasing to gain approval and affirmation of her self-worth. Simone de Beauvoir captures this sentiment expressively in her *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* as she speaks of her mother:

> Her hold over me stemmed indeed a great deal from the very intimacy of our relationship. . . . Any reproach made by my mother, even her slightest frown, was a threat to my security: without her approval, I no longer felt I had any right to live.
>
> If her dispproval touched me so deeply, it was because I set so much store by her good opinion.[23]

This same dynamic appeared very strongly in the lives of the women I interviewed. According to their accounts, their mothers were traditional family-oriented homemakers, who had a strong and often controlling hold over them. Many were still struggling with their own relationships with their mothers when they, themselves, were mothers and grandmothers.[24]

> My relationship with my mother was mixed up as a kid. I always thought she knew everything. If I didn't wear my boots and she said it would rain, it would rain. She was hard on me verbally and emotionally. I still have ties and they are hard to break [a separated, middle-class displaced homemaker].

Because the mother's love is so important to the daughter, she does not want to jeopardize it by incurring disapproval, so she tries to be a "good girl" as much as possible. To fail to please her mother, her husband, and others who are important to her threatens her sense of self-worth. Many of the women I interviewed resented the hold their mothers had over them. They recognized that it inhibited their ability to develop an independent sense of self. But few had rebelled against their mothers' authority, because they did not want to hurt their mothers and jeopardize their love.[25] One divorced, middle-class displaced homemaker explains this dynamic:

> I still have a problem of keeping in control vis-à-vis my mother. Very often I give in because I don't like to upset her. I become the martyr. . . . I don't want to win with her. It's not important. If I win, she will lose, and it would be more difficult to live with her. *By hurting her, I only hurt myself* [emphasis added].

This initial reliance on their mothers, which results from gender identification, leads to a need to please others: the women almost unanimously put others' needs ahead of their own; they almost unanimously gave in to their husbands in times of disagreement, to maintain peace and harmony; and the majority also found themselves influenced or dominated by other people's opinions and hesitant to express their own views. All their lives they had tried to be "good" by minimizing individual self-expression in order to be loved.

The following is a typical answer to my question, "Did you find that you tended to put others' needs ahead of your own?"

> That is the story of my life, but now even my children are starting to tell me not to do it. It must be bad when your children start saying that. I just started out that way. I never wanted to upset my mother. She was sickly. I found myself doing things because she wanted me to, not because I wanted to do them. And my mother-in-law was the same. She took over from my mother. I was satisfied to do what she thought was right, and that doesn't make too much sense because I'm not a passive person. The ability to please someone else gets in the way of what you want.

To my question, "Why do you think it is more important to please others than please yourself?" this working-class widow replied:

> A need to be loved, a need to be loved! I guess I have always felt that need. You stay within the forms, you conform in order to be loved. I heard for many years from my mother-in-law, "Oh, she's just like a daughter to me," and that made me feel great, but it wasn't doing anything for my personality because I became pale in her presence. People associated me with my mother-in-law; they didn't think of me as a person.

Many of the women reiterated the same theme. As a divorced, middle-class homemaker said:

> The approval of others is absolutely important. I'm a people-pleaser. . . . I'm used to pleasing people. I'm used to having a pleasing personality. . . . I'm used to pleasing children. I'm far too humble a person. It makes me mad at myself to be this way. I'd like to change that and assume some role of self-importance aside from my family.

Generally, the women felt that, if they denied themselves, others would look out for them and care for them; if they made themselves vulnerable, others would come to their rescue. More often than not, they found themselves disrespected rather than loved. The hard reality they all had had to face was that, although they had cared for others in hopes of being cared for, they were left without anyone to support them.

These women gave in 70 percent of the time when they disagreed with their husbands. The main reason appeared to be to avoid conflict and disharmony. One divorced, working-class woman said:

> I would get tired of arguments. . . . I would give in and, when I got low, I wished he were dead. Very seldom I won an argument. I'd usually give in and so I had low self-esteem. He'd browbeat me. I couldn't do anything right. I couldn't have any free time. Giving in was easier to do than fighting him 'cause I didn't like fighting. But I didn't know how to get out of that situation. I felt locked in it forever.

Power—the ability to bring about change despite resistance—means that one person's will may prevail over another's will. Overcoming resistance creates the risk of incurring anger, criticism, or disapproval from those who are being opposed. The women I interviewed demonstrated in a number of ways that they had no desire to run this risk.[26] As one middle-class widow put it, "I'd resist and resist and then I'd just give in to stop it 'cause I couldn't stand the conflict. I was afraid of what he'd do."

The dependence on approval was both psychological and financial; both subjective and objective conditions influenced the decision to "give in." The result was an erosion of the women's sense of self-worth, because they did not stick up for themselves.

> He had a weird sense of humor, especially around our friends. He'd run me down. I wouldn't stick up for myself. I took it. I figured he needed to run someone else down in order to build himself up.
>
> Q. Is that why you didn't stick up for yourself?
>
> I guess I thought the most important thing was for him to maintain his ego because he was the money earner. I didn't realize people are not as fragile as I thought they were or that I was so important that I could make a difference . . . . Crazy because I sacrificed myself. So many times I wanted to say something but I didn't want to attack his strength because I needed him to be strong to take care of me, the family and the whole thing [a divorced, middle-class woman].

Each time the women gave in, they died a little and the relationship died a little. It was a price most of them were willing to pay, for a while at least, to maintain family stability and harmony. In the process, they experienced abuse and denial of their feelings, which made them lose confidence in themselves.

I presented the women with a card that listed several social communication styles. They identified 66 percent of the time with patterns that reflected some degree of "other orientation." Repeating phrases from the card that rang true for her, one middle-class widow said:

> Oh, I'm "very aware of others' feelings and opinions, which makes me hesitant to speak my own mind." It's easy to identify with others. I am very aware of others' opinions. Also, I tend to "listen attentively and have things to say but rarely speak up; I'm happy to hear others' views." Listening attentively, it fits very well with the first one. It goes back to a lack of assertiveness. . . . I wonder if it's women's work in the home, as we are interdependent on others for approval. Yes, especially if there is no outside source like work . . . my part-time work did help me. It goes back to how you feel and how you like yourself. If you like yourself, then you don't need that other person.

In conclusion, the displacement crisis created an identity crisis for these women. For years, they had identified as a "we." A middle-class widow said: "The sense of worth I had was all tied up in my husband. When he died, all of a sudden I was alone. I had to find my own sense of worth which did not include another person. I had to become an 'I' instead of a 'we.'" But who is this "I"? Daughter, wife, mother, homemaker are who they have been. Now they were being forced, often for the first time in their lives, to look at themselves as individuals. It was a new and frightening experience, because years of dependence had eroded their sense of self-worth. This is why so many felt condemned to freedom. One woman expressed this sentiment directly: "I had spent my whole life being a super daughter, a super wife, a super mother—so much so that there was nothing left for me. With the divorce, I hit bottom" (Margaret Miller). Another woman (Christine Horner) expressed the feelings poetically:

I see an unknown woman
through her windshield
through her tears
it is my same face

the face a man once covered
in love, the thick and invisible
condemnation which effaces
it is too soon for her to guess herself

out of hiding, to guess
how the old skins peel, a map
for unseen places rising
from this empty mirror

Work in the Home: Financial Dependence

When women accept primary responsibility for rearing children, it is more difficult for them to become economically self-supporting. The resulting reliance on others for financial support is an objective constraint that becomes psychologically internalized over time as dependence.

Women always sacrifice some level of economic independence, success, or status when they must carry the full responsibility of child rearing. A popular article by a modern professional woman frankly states this point:

> I'm glad to be part of a generation of women who are free to make choices about careers and families. However, as far as I can tell, the seamless web of family-and-prestigious-career just doesn't work. At some point, you have to sit down and decide whether to conduct your life in pursuit of money, status, power . . . or something else. The *something else* is hard to describe, because it's not part of the official story of my generation of women. . . .
>
> The point I never see in the success stories—but that my life as a mother with a career has convinced me is true—is that you really can't have it all. . . . It's not an all-or-nothing choice, but the compromises are real.[27]

One middle-aged mother in the comparison group for this study gave some of the reasons why the compromises are real:

> Kids make it self-destructive for women to try to keep up with men. . . . Children's lives demand daily care and nurturance. And then there is the time spent arranging chid care, meeting with people who will care for your child, involvement in the activities and friends of your child, the PTA . . . there's always something, and you can't act as if it's not there.

The displaced homemakers I interviewed usually were married in the 1950s, a time when society encouraged women to stay home to care for their children. Even when they worked, it was generally understood that they were merely supplementing the family income. In all but three of the marriages in this study, the men were the main income earners. In over half the cases, both working-class and middle-class husbands tightly controlled the finances, which made the wives feel dependent and often resentful. Popular notions that middle-class marriage relationships are more equal, open, and sharing than working-class relationships were not confirmed by my findings. The middle class may view equality as more desirable, but the reality is about the same amount of inequality between spouses.

The women sometimes resented the economic control their husbands exercised, but their resentment never amounted to effective resistance.

> Yes, I felt very dependent on him economically. When we were both working together, he would put his paycheck in the bank and I would pay all the bills with mine. . . . Incredible! And when I stopped working, and I asked him for money for myself because I used to run the household, there was never enough for me to do anything with [a widowed, middle-class homemaker].

In some cases, the women did not question or challenge their economic dependence. They subjectively accepted what was objectively imposed:

> I felt very dependent for everything. I didn't have any life outside of the home. He controlled the money. I never kept a checkbook 'til last year. I never knew how much money he made and I never asked. I was given so much for food. I didn't have a budget and no money for clothes. My husband used to want me to buy new clothes; in fact, he would pick them out and buy them for me, like in my childhood—my mother always picked out my clothes. He took that role [a separated, middle-class homemaker].

In 35 percent of the cases, the woman's feeling of economic dependence was mitigated by the fact that she shared in the financial decision making, managed the family budget, or felt free to spend money on the house and the family as she saw fit. But even these women did not feel they had a personal right to the money, and their husbands exercised veto power over any important financial decisions. They were only managing the family budget; although administration gave them some power, the final authority resided with the boss.

> He was always generous. I wasn't aware of feeling dependent, but it did have a psychological effect by causing me to withdraw from asserting myself a lot of the time. . . . I've always had the feeling that it was his money and always had trouble rationalizing it for myself. . . . I could buy for the kids. If I had a salary coming in, I would have spent more on myself [a separated, middle-class homemaker].

Because they were dependent on their husbands for financial resources, these women did not have ongoing experience in controlling their lives financially. Lacking this experience, over time they came to believe they were incapable of controlling their lives, psychologically internalizing their personal experience of financial dependence.

> There was a definite erosion of my self-confidence during my marriage. He is a master of it. And by nature, being dependent financially and having the children, I came more and more to doubt my feelings and feel he was it.
>
> It goes back to my mother. Even though I had a strong mind, emotionally I couldn't stand up to them. Maybe I had a need for them to be it, never having had the opportunity to flex my own muscles. Maybe I was afraid to flex them, to find out [a divorced, middle-class woman].

Never having had the opportunity to "flex her muscles," this woman was afraid they didn't exist. This lack of experience made her vulnerable to her husband's accusations that she was incapable and inept. A majority of the women talked of this same vulnerability:

> He made me feel like I was nothin', just nothin'. . . . He'd always call me stupid. It got so that my name became "stupid." . . . He'd make me feel so small . . . I started to believe it! When I first got married I felt independent, but it didn't last three months [a separated, working-class woman].

Even women whose husbands had positive evaluations of them relied on their husbands' judgments of their abilities rather than their own. When their husbands were gone, they found it difficult to build a sense of self-esteem based on their own evaluations rather than their husbands'.

Social Norms: Home and Marketplace

Norms and values are learned from personal experiences. Because work in the home differs from work in the marketplace, it has a different set of norms, values, and behavioral patterns. Mothering develops abilities to sustain, nurture, and empathize, because mothers must learn to anticipate and identify unverbalized needs of children. This creates a self that is very responsive to outside demands. As a mother and as a wife, a woman continously puts the needs of others ahead of her own. Such work requires administrative skill and flexibility and is characterized by continuous interruptions. The homemaker is used to being her own boss and setting her own pace within the framework of the needs and demands of her children and husband. Because there are no standardized objective criteria for measuring her success, she develops an internalized set of standards that she can apply to herself.[28] The "home culture" that evolves out of this structure of work has values and norms very different from those of marketplace work. I call it a *home* culture rather than a *woman's* culture, because its characteristics are generated by the structure of the work rather than anything that is innately female. The values it generates are beliefs in human welfare, interdependence, cooperation, service, and harmony. It emphasizes means rather than ends.

Marketplace work is characterized by task orientation and goals of self-advancement. It puts ends over means. The attributes it calls for are, in many ways, directly opposed to those needed for effective child rearing and homemaking. As one study discussing the two spheres pointed out, "the fundamental personality traits each evokes are at points diametrically opposed, so that what are assets for one become liabilities for the other, and the full realization of one role threatens defeat in the other."[29]

Moreover, it is important to recognize that the home culture is subordinate to the marketplace culture, because only in the latter is monetary value created. In a society where success is measured by the money one makes, home work and its values are not highly esteemed. Also, homemakers are less equipped to cope with the demands of what they see as "the outside world" because they have equipped themselves to deal with the demands of the private domain. They are like strangers or refugees in the world of work, and they experience entry into it as a kind of culture shock. One divorced, middle-class woman expressed this as she described her job hunt:

> I haven't had enough exposure. How can you choose when you don't know? It's like being in a foreign country. People wear different clothes and speak a different language. You have to take time and try, but I'm lacking time to figure out what I want to do. . . .
>
> What can I bring to a job? I'm willing to learn. I'm good with people. I have an organizational sense. I'm very tenacious. I work even when sick, and when things need to get done I see that they get done. But these aren't marketable skills.

In the marketplace, displaced homemakers are evaluated by a new set of criteria including punctuality, efficiency, self-reliance, competitiveness, and achieving goals established by others. Since they rarely wish to give up the very different values of the home culture, they find it difficult to win power in the world of work. During my interviews, I asked the displaced homemakers to list what priority the following items would have for them in evaluating a job—job security, good pay, self-fulfillment, flexible time schedule, room for advancement, nice environment or people, service to others, and other. They listed as the top three in priority (1) self-fulfillment, (2) service to others, and (3) nice people in the work environment. The women often equated self-fulfillment with service to others. They significantly failed to pick good pay or room for advancement. Job security trailed as a fourth choice. A full 25 percent of the women went out of their way to tell me that they were not at all interested in room for advancement. They said this in a tone that indicated it was a matter of principle. This did not mean they wanted low-level work, however. They wanted meaningful work but they didn't see the need to move up a job ladder. They tended to view advancement in terms of competitiveness, a quality they abhorred because they felt it hurt and alienated others. As one divorced, working-class woman expressed it: "To strive is not as important to me. If it was fulfilling my need, I would strive, but as things are for me, it's more gratifying for me to be helping someone else."

The values these women uphold are life-enhancing ones that have much to contribute to society. But they also mask a certain fear of power. The women are unsure of themselves and are afraid of invoking criticism or disapproval if they exercise any power that could threaten others. To the question, "How do you feel about handling a position of responsibility and making decisions?" one responded characteristically:

> I have a hard time with it. I don't like that feeling about myself but I have come to a point of accepting that's the way I am. In fact, I backed off from a lot of responsibility because it's easier than stepping in and worrying about it. The worry and the unsureness of doing well, of accomplishing, keeps me away from it. But I find that, with decision-making, the more you are unsure of yourself . . . the more incapacitated you are to make a decision [a middle-class widow].

Generally, the women saw nothing positive about exerting power. Instead, they viewed it as "dog-eat-dog," hurting others, confrontational, corrupting, and alienating. A divorced, working-class interviewee explained:

I'd like to have power for myself, but I don't want to exert it.

Q. Why?

Because I've seen what some people that have a little do. Those with a little power are very dangerous because they don't know how to exercise it. I wouldn't want to become a dangerous person.

Q. But when you have power, you can do things for others, can't you?

I've found that people resent people with power, and I don't want anybody resenting me. I try to be pleasant, try to be nice.

The women didn't think about the fact that, from a position of strength and influence, they might assert the home cultural values that were so meaningful to them. But from their position of weakness and fear, these values perpetuated their powerlessness.

CONCLUSION

Women's gender identity, their personal experience working in the home and being financially dependent, and the divergent norms and values of the home and marketplace cultures (generated by our society's sexual division of labor) induce feelings of dependence. These, in turn, reinforce the very objective conditions that hold women down. A feminine sense of self that relies on others for approval and validation evolves out of the conditions of the home where women are the primary child rearers. This reliance on others' approval led displaced homemakers to shy away from power, because they feared incurring the criticism or opposition of others. The personal experience of economic dependence in their marriages because their work was homemaking meant that they did not learn how to "flex their muscles." As a result, they came to believe that they were incompetent and incapable, a belief that was reinforced by disparaging husbands or a marketplace that devalued their work as homemakers. Convinced they had little to offer, they found it difficult to sell themselves to employers, to stick up for their rights, or to obtain what they felt was their due. Adhering to home cultural values such as concern for human welfare, interdependence, empathy, and nurturance, and developing behavior patterns that were functional for the effective accomplishment of homemaking, the women found it very difficult to adjust to the marketplace world, which called for a different set of values and behavior patterns. The objective conditions of their work in the home had created a normative and behavioral mode that was often in opposition and subordinate to the marketplace mode of action. Having internalized the home cultural values, the women were ill-prepared and often unwilling to adjust to marketplace values. This situation reinforced their position of powerlessness vis-à-vis the public domain.

The underlying structural cause of powerlessness is the sexual division of labor that relegates to women the primary responsibility for child rearing and homemaking. Displaced homemakers have been completely immersed in this traditional sex role, and so their experiences are more intense and more extreme. But they are not atypical. Women as a group are immersed in the home cultural identity, experience, and values when they are primarily raised by their mothers and when they become mothers. They have less power than men, and all women experience the consequences of this disparity. Women will not be free and equal until work in the home and the marketplace is redistributed more equitably between the sexes. This will require a significant restructuring of paid work to allow both men and women time to do both. A society that truly values the family and also develops a genuine commitment to equal opportunity for women must find the means for both parents to participate in child rearing and its related duties, so that women do not carry the primary responsibility. Only when men are as responsible as women for the care of children will women have the possibility of independence, will children have the opportunity to develop androgynously, and will home and marketplace cultural values no longer be segregated. A genuine commitment to equality of the sexes ultimately implies a restructuring of work in the marketplace and in the home so that men and women have equal access to the responsibilities and privileges of *both* worlds.

NOTES

1. In keeping with their desire to claim more power for themselves, some displaced homemakers in this study asked specifically to be identified by name.
2. This is a conservative estimate of numbers. The Women's Bureau estimate of 4 million is based on a national survey of marital status, labor force participation, and income (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, *Survey of Income and Education, March 1976* [Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976]). From this, approximations were developed in U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, *Tables Pertinent to Women and Displaced Homemakers by Selected Characteristics* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, July 13, 1979). The inexact numbers are due to the fact that there is no official category for counting displaced homemakers, especially since homemaking is not counted as work. Estimates in the late 1970s have ranged as high as 15 million. One study (Carol Eliason, *Neglected Women: The Educational Needs of Displaced Homemakers, Single Mothers and Older Women* [Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs, 1977–78], 13) points out:

   The *Census* does not identify displaced homemakers as a group but it does show 3,164,000 widows and 2,435,000 divorced women in the 35–64 age group. Since 1968, the number of households headed by women has grown 10 times faster than traditional 2-adult families have grown.
3. A national study of displaced homemaker projects funded by the Department of Labor confims this point. These projects served low-income (CETA-eligible) women only and participants were white, black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American Indian, although the largest numbers served in the first year of the projects were white and black women. See Lois M. Greenwood and Deborah Kogan, *Assessment of the National Displaced Homemaker Program*, vol. I: *Overview of the 47 Displaced Homemaker Demonstration Projects, A Cross-Project Analysis*, prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (Berkeley, Calif.: Berkeley Planning Associates, Sept. 30, 1981), 120–21.
4. Lois B. Shaw, "Economic Consequences of Marital Disruption," in National Commission for Manpower Policy, *Women's Changing Roles at Home and on the Job*, Special Report no. 26 (Washington, D.C.: National Commission for Manpower Policy, Sept. 1978), 197. This study refers to standard definitions of poverty and relative poverty.

5. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment in Perspective: Working Women*, Report no. 669 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, second quarter 1982).
6. Richard A. Batterton, Secretary, Maryland Department of Human Resources, Testimony before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Employment, Poverty, and Migratory Labor, September, 12, 1977, 2.
7. Since the movement began in California to intiate legislation for services to displaced homemakers, this has become an oft-quoted phrase in testimony before Congress, articles, etc. The phrase was first brought to my attention by Milo Smith, cofounder of the Oakland Displaced Homemakers Center.
8. Aliyah Stein, *Needs Assessment Study of Center Participants* (Oakland, Calif.: Displaced Homemakers Center, November 1977).
9. Greenwood and Kogan, *Assessment*, vol. I, 34.
10. Greenwood and Kogan, *Assessment*, vol. V: *Summary of Research Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations* (Oct. 30, 1981), 23.
11. Field research also included three years of participant-observation at the Displaced Homemakers Center, Oakland, California; a review of survey data on the center's partcipants; in-depth discussions with the center staff and other key figures active in the early period of the displaced homemakers movement; and correspondence with four displaced homemakers centers across the country about their participants' reported needs.
12. Determining the class status for married women is problematic because it is usually dependent on the class status of their fathers and husbands. I settled on the traditional method of determining class for the women by examining their husbands' levels of income, education, and types of jobs.
13. See the definitions developed by Robert A. Dahl, "Power," *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan Co., Free Press, 1968), 409; Rollo May, *Power and Innocence* (New York: Delta Books, 1972), 19; Jean B. Miller, *Toward a New Psychology of Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1976), chap. 10.
14. See Dahl, "Power."
15. For references to achievement motivation studies, see Jacquelynne E. Parsons, "Internal Factors Influencing Women's Career Choice," in Susan Golden, ed., *Work, Family Roles and Support Systems* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Continuing Education, 1978), 8. For the reverse dynamic, see Martin E. P. Seligman, *Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1975). In three steps toward learned helplessness, Seligman's study finds:

    > A man . . . must begin with information about the contingency of outcome upon response. The information about contingency must be processed and transformed into a cognitive representation of the contingency. Such a representation has been variously called "learning," "perceiving" or "believing" that response and outcome are independent. . . . This expectation is the causal condition for the motivational, cognitive and emotional debilitation that accompanies helplessness [47–48].

    There *are* exceptions to this rule about self-esteem. One is Lasswell's classic "compensation theory," where he argues that "a power seeker . . . pursues power as a means of compensation against . . . low estimates of the self" (cited in Paul M. Sniderman, *Personality and Democratic Politics* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975], 227). Some people who have a low sense of self-esteem will have a need to prove themselves in an area that is legitimate for them. It has been more common in the past for men than women to try to prove themselves in the public domain because women traditionally have not seen this arena as a legitimate sphere of action for themselves. Jane S. Jaquette, "Introduction: Women in American Politics," in Jane S. Jaquette, ed., *Women in Politics* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1974), xiii–xxvi.

16. See S. Coopersmith, *the Antecedents of Self-Esteem* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1967), 4; Sniderman, *Personality and Democratic Politics*, 67; Patricia Wiles Middlebrook, *Social Psychology and Modern Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980), 56.
17. For more explanation, see my discussion of these mediators and how they operate in Lois M. Greenwood, "Women, Work, and Powerlessness: A Case Study of the Displaced Homemaker" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, Department of Political Science, 1980), chaps. 3 and 9.
18. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Seabury Press, 1968).
19. James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name* (New York: Dial Press, 1961).
20. For further discussions of boys' gender identity in relationship to their mothers, see Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), chaps. 5 and 6; Margaret Mead, *Male and Female* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1949); Karen Horney, "The Dread of Women," in Karen Horney, *Feminine Psychology* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1967), 133–46; Bruno Bettelheim, "Symbolic Wounds," in William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt, eds., *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 230–40.
21. For further discussion of this subject, see Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering;* Mead, *Male and Female;* Miller, *Toward a New Psychology;* Dorothy Dinnerstein, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1977).
22. For further explanation of this dynamic, see Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, chap. 7; Miller, *Toward a New Psychology;* Judith Wells, "Daddy's Little Girl," *Libera*, winter 1972, 43–45; Judith M. Bardwick and Elizabeth Douvan, "Ambivalence: The Socialization of Women," in Vivian Gornick and Barbara Moran, eds., *Women in Sexist Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 225–41.
23. Simone de Beauvoir, *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1958), 39.
24. The Oakland Displaced Homemakers Center staff reported this to be one of the major issues participants struggled with as they sought new means to become self-sufficient. Chodorow cites a study based on interviews with seventy-five mothers, daughters, and grandaughters that confirms these findings. The mothers and daughters "tend to remain emotionally bound up with each other in what might be called a semisymbiotic relationship." Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering*, 109.
25. Naturally, this psychodynamic will vary according to the circumstances and characteristics of the mother–daughter relationship. Recent studies have shown that daughters of working mothers tend to have higher self-esteem than those of mothers who stay home. Also, women whose mothers were less affectionate were found to be high achievers. See Donna Moore, "Effects of Parental Child Rearing Attitudes and Attitudes toward Women on Female Children's Attitudes toward Women, Self Expectations and Self Esteem" (Ph.D. diss. proposal, University of California, Davis, Department of Psychology, Nov. 1, 1976), 43. Moore notes:

    > Wright and Tuska [B. Wright and S. Tuska, "The Nature and Origin of Feeling Feminine," *British Journal Social of Clinical Psychology* 5 (1966):140–49] examined the relationship between self-stated masculinity or femininity . . . in over 2600 college Ss [students], finding that women who were rated as feminine recalled an emotionally satisfying mother and a successful father, while women rated as masculine reported an emotionally satisfying father but a frustrating, unsympathetic mother [41].

26. For further illustration of this point, see my discussion of the women's attitudes toward responsibility, taking iniitiative, competition, new situations, power, and so forth, in Greenwood, "Women, Work, and Powerlessness," chap. 10.
27. Deborah Fallows, "Mothers and Other Strangers," *Washington Monthly*, Jan. 1980, 22–24. See further accounts of this double-bind for working women who mother in Marilyn Fabe and Norma Wikler, eds., *Up against the Clock* (New York: Warner Books,

1979), and Phyllis Chesler's compelling personal story in *With Child: A Diary of Motherhood* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), chaps. 5 and 6.

28. See Ann Oakley, *The Sociology of Housework* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), chaps. 5 and 6.

29. Mirra Komarovsky, "Cultural Contradictions and Sex Roles," cited in Ann Oakley, *Woman's Work: The Housewife Past and Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 81.

JUDITH M. STILLION

Women and widowhood: The suffering beyond grief

And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on.
Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

A spouse dies. A person is widowed. Close your eyes for a moment and picture the widowed person. What do you see? The overwhelming response to this exercise is to visualize an older woman, usually a relatively poor older woman. Clearly, visualization exercises such as this one tap into generalized ways of thinking. Why should we think mainly of a woman when we visualize a bereaved spouse, and why should the woman be poor and old? The purpose of this article is to examine the condition of widowed women in our culture and to analyze critically the emerging stereotype of the widow. The specific question addressed throughout is: Is the traditional socialization of women in our culture adaptive when considered in the light of the incidence, inevitability, and consequences of widowhood for today's woman?

WIDOWHOOD AS A WOMAN'S PROBLEM

Death is no respecter of persons. It is the one event that is thoroughly democratic. However, the circumstances surrounding death, the time at which it generally occurs, and the consequences of death to the living are not the same for males and females.

No accurate national statistics concerning differential male–female longevity for the United States as a whole existed prior to the twentieth century. However, Massachusetts kept accurate records that cited an average life span of 38.3 years for males and 40.5 years for females in the year 1850.[1] By 1920, the average male life expectancy had increased to 53.6 years, while the average female life expectancy was 54.6 years. In the next sixty years, life expectancy continued to increase so that by 1980 it was 69.8 years for males and 77.5 years for females. Figures for the nonwhite population have tended to lag behind those for whites. Nonwhite males' life expectancy in 1980 was 65.3 years compared to 70.5 for white males.

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The figure for nonwhite females was 74.0 compared to 78.1 for white females.[2] While life expectancy has increased for both males and females during the past century, the increase has been inequitable. Women live longer than men, an average of almost eight years longer.

Various reasons have been suggested for this differential. It is obvious that men have been killed in disproportionate numbers in the two world wars and two major military actions of this century, thus lowering their average longevity. In addition, women have benefited from improvements in childbirth and family planning methods. However, many other reasons need to be considered in examining the increased sex differential in longevity.[3] For example, males tend to work in dirty and hazardous places more frequently than females. Cigarette smoking has been implicated as a causative factor in the life expectancy disparity between the sexes, and males have historically smoked more than females do. Socialization factors, such as pressure on men to take more risks, and their training to be inexpressive and "strong" in their interpersonal relationships, may well add to the considerable stress inherent in an achievement-oriented life. Biological factors may also be involved; males are at higher risk of death at every age from conception on.[4] Whatever the causes, the effect is the same. Women are widowed much more frequently than are men at every age across the life span. Table 1 shows the percentages widowed by age and sex in 1980. It is clear that by age sixty-five, almost five times as many females are widowed as males. Above age seventy-five the sex differential in widowhood begins to decline simply because women as well as men in that age group are reaching the outer limits of their life expectancy. However, the differential is still almost three to one.

Approximately 8 percent of the total population of the United States was widowed in 1981.[5] Among whites 2.2 percent of the male population over fifteen years of age was widowed in 1981 compared to 11.9 percent of the female population. The corresponding figures for blacks were 3.7 percent for males and

TABLE 1 Percentage widowed by age and sex, 1980

	Percentage widowed	
Age	Male	Female
18–19	—	0.1
20–24	—	0.2
25–29	0.1	0.4
30–34	0.1	1.2
35–44	0.4	2.2
45–54	1.6	7.0
55–64	4.0	18.9
65–74	8.5	40.3
75 and over	24.0	68.0

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 102d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981) 38.

12.7 percent for females. For persons of Spanish origin, they were 1.6 percent for males and 6.0 percent for females. It is obvious that loss of spouse is an issue that affects more women than men.

SOCIETAL FACTORS EXACERBATING WIDOWHOOD FOR WOMEN

If length of life alone were considered, women would appear to be the privileged gender. However, as Toynbee has pointed out, "There are two parties to the suffering that death inflicts; and, in the apportionment of this suffering, the survivor takes the brunt."[6] What we must examine in the case of widowhood is the question of quality rather than quantity of life.

In any family used to having two wage earners, the death of a spouse will result in an economic loss. However, wives as a group make roughly one-quarter of what husbands make. Figures for 1980 show that wives earn an average of $4,552 compared to an average of $16,463 for husbands. Even when the statistics are revised to include only husbands and wives who are working at least thirty-five hours a week for fifty weeks of the year, the figures are $11,451 for wives compared to $20,622 for husbands. It is obvious that the death of a male presents a greater financial burden to the spouse and family than the death of a female in most cases.[7] Table 2 compares widows and widowers living in poverty. (In 1980 the average poverty threshold for a nonfarm family of four was $8,414.)[8] At all ages, widowed females are far likelier to live in poverty than are males. In the forty-five to fifty-four age group, the percentage of widowed men living in poverty does exceed the percentage of widowed women living in poverty. However, the actual numbers—36,000 men compared to 156,000 women—leave little doubt that, even in this age range, poverty in widowhood is more a woman's problem. Widowed black women are particularly overrepresented in the poverty statistics. The percentage of widowed women living below the poverty level generally increases with age. By age sixty-five, one out of every four widows is living in poverty. Among blacks, the figure is one out of two. The total percentage of all widowed males over age fifteen living in poverty is 19.4 compared to 24.8 percent for widowed females. The stereotype of the "merry widow" of musical fame clearly is not prevalent in the current culture of the United States.

Widows are also less likely to remarry than are widowers. Two factors feed into this situation. The first is the social norm that women should marry men older than themselves. Because of their longevity, it would make more sense for women to marry men five to eight years their juniors. Instead, women currently marry men who average 2½ years older than themselves,[9] thus adding to the biological discrepancy and frequently ensuring a full decade of widowhood toward the end of life. Widowed women are also less likely to remarry than women who have been divorced. The latest data available (based on 1975 figures) indicated that approximately two-thirds of women whose first marriages had ended in divorce had remarried, while less than one-third of those who had been widowed had remarried. Moreover, divorced women remarried an average of one year earlier than widowed women did.[10] Comparable data for men were not tabulated.

The second factor affecting remarriage for women is simply supply and

TABLE 2 ***Number and percentage of widows and widowers below poverty level by age, sex, and race, 1980***

	Total widowed			Whites widowed			Blacks widowed		
Age and sex	Number	No. in poverty	Percentage in poverty	Number	No. in poverty	Percentage in poverty	Number	No. in poverty	Percentage in poverty
20–24									
Female	22,000	13,000	—	18,000	12,000	—	5,000	1,000	—
Male	4,000	—	—	2,000	—	—	2,000	—	—
25–29									
Female	49,000	18,000	—	35,000	8,000	—	13,000	9,000	—
Male	9,000	—	—	7,000	4,000	—	2,000	—	—
30–34									
Female	83,000	17,000	20.8	51,000	7,000	—	31,000	10,000	—
Male	13,000	4,000	—	9,000	3,000	—	2,000	2,000	—
35–44									
Female	294,000	78,000	26.4	211,000	38,000	17.8	75,000	38,000	51.3
Male	61,000	14,000	—	39,000	2,000	—	19,000	11,000	—
45–54									
Female	795,000	156,000	19.6	610,000	91,000	14.9	167,000	60,000	36.2
Male	156,000	36,000	22.9	109,000	20,000	18.0	40,000	14,000	—
55–64									
Female	2,128,000	538,000	25.3	1,759,000	382,000	21.7	314,000	143,000	45.6
Male	410,000	76,000	18.7	329,000	38,000	11.4	75,000	34,000	45.8
65 and over									
Female	7,474,000	1,874,000	25.1	6,688,000	1,513,000	22.6	702,000	384,000	49.6
Male	1,296,000	244,000	18.8	1,113,000	174,000	15.6	169,000	65,000	38.4

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Chararacteristics of the Population below the Poverty Level: 1980," *Current Population Reports,* Consumer Income Series P–60, no. 133, July 1982, 93, 96.

Note: Dashes indicate that figures were not computed by the source.

demand. Since men die more frequently at every age, the number of available women increases with age. Because males have been socialized to regard youth and desirability as synonymous, those who wish to remarry are most likely to choose from available women much younger than themselves (see the article by Inge Powell Bell in this volume).

The fact that remarriage is less likely for women than for men carries with it the physical problem of lack of sexual intimacy. Our culture values sexuality. It expresses this value by surrounding us with images that depict sexual intimacy as one of the prime joys of living. Experts in sex therapy tell us that maintaining a regular sex life is essential to continued well-being into old age.[11] However, for many women, particularly those now in their fifties and sixties, it is unthinkable to have sexual intimacy outside of a marital relationship. For them, widowhood literally becomes a sentence to celibacy. Michels, in a short article on sexuality and bereavement, points out that, while our society recognizes the problem of sexuality in widowhood, it offers no solutions. The immediate period of bereavement may involve such extreme pain that sexual urges are virtually eliminated, but, once that period is over, sexual needs resurface, often accompanied by feelings of guilt and anxiety. Michels concludes that "there is no easy solution. It is useful, however, to regard this problem as inevitable and face it openly. . . . [The individual] must recognize that any possible solution may include patterns of behavior which might, consciously or unconsciously, lead to anxiety and guilt. He [sic] must strive to gratify his sexual needs with a minimum of distress to continue his life as fruitfully as possible."[12] Such a direction is in essence no direction at all, and if it provides help to anyone it is to the male of the species, who can more easily find available outlets for his sexual urges.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS EXACERBATING WIDOWHOOD FOR WOMEN

Both males and females grieve when they lose a person whom they love. Grief has only recently begun to be understood as a powerful psychological state involving physical symptoms that can be severe enough to lead to death.[13] It is not our purpose here to detail the general physical or psychological responses to bereavement but rather to examine special problems that women may face following bereavement as a result of their socialization. In addition, we will look at the continuing psychological costs to widows after the intensive grieving process has passed.

The initial phase of the grief reaction has been characterized as one of *shock and disbelief.* In one widow's words: "I felt as though I had been betrayed by life itself. Everything I'd always taken for granted—counted on—was gone. I didn't know what to do or where to turn. I kept thinking I'd wake up and find that my real world still existed. But I didn't." Such feelings of helplessness and unreality are common. Silverman, who began an extensive peer counseling program for widows, has pointed out that women's traditional socialization toward dependence may strengthen the feelings of being lost and out of control that seem central to this stage of grief.[14]

The second stage of grief, that of *rehabilitation,* involves working through both negative and positive feelings about the deceased and life in general. Three major negative emotions occur during this period: anger, resentment, and guilt. Of the three, anger seems to present a particular problem to women. "Most women are terribly frightened of their own anger. Largely this is because they don't know what will happen if it is released. It is as if their world might fall apart. The unfortunate truth is that when such women expressed anger as small children, they did pay an exorbitant price for it. Now they are defended against even feeling anger."[15] Anger during this stage may be directed toward those who caused the death, those who could not prevent the death, fate, God, or the spouse himself for dying. Although irrational, such feelings can be resolved if they are recognized, accepted, and confronted. However, if they are denied, they often are turned inward and expressed as feelings of depression or added guilt.

The third period of mourning has been labeled *renewal.* It is the time in which the widow's task is to let go of the past; to build a new life, socially and emotionally; and to take on the role of single head of the household. We have already examined the financial problems involved in this stage for many widows. Once again socialization for passivity and dependence may inhibit a woman's attempts to rebuild her life.

Older generations of women, in particular, were raised to be dependent on their fathers until they were married, when the dependence shifted to their husbands. The institution of marriage itself not only defends but also promotes mutual dependence. Males may be dependent in such areas as cooking, washing clothes, and housecleaning. For females the areas of dependence frequently involve mobility, financial planning, and fiscal management. As Caine and others have pointed out, many widows do not know where the electrical fuseboxes are located in the house, have never changed a fuse, cannot mow the lawn, and know nothing about automobile maintenance and repair.[16]

What is perhaps more important, widowed women face a psychological barrier that widowed men do not experience. The women frequently feel that they cannot initiate new social contacts, especially with members of the opposite sex, because of ingrained passivity or fear that this behavior might be perceived as "unladylike." In the past, women were consistently taught that it was inappropriate to take the lead in male–female relationships; showing too much enthusiasm, even in general social situations, might be interpreted as "being pushy."

Problems frequently arise between newly widowed women and their former friends and acquaintances. One woman described the pain of being left out of social events by the married couples with whom she used to socialize because she was regarded as a threat to the wives in the group. Another widow told the fairly common story of being comforted by her husband's best married friend only to have the comforting turn into a sexual invitation that frightened and depressed her.

The twin circumstances of reluctance to seek out new relationships assertively and rejection or exploitation by former friends may add to the natural loneliness that bereavement imposes. The widowed male does not seem to experience these same circumstances. On the contrary, an extra male is often welcomed at social occasions. Since females outnumber males increasingly from age eighteen on, the widower frequently finds himself in demand when he is ready to resume an active social life.

Another psychological factor that widows experience more acutely than widowers is loss of identity. Women are encouraged from an early age to regard marriage as a vocation and to invest more of their identity in the marital role than men do. A man's identity is lodged in his occupation; a woman's in her husband. Most women over forty grew up with the belief that they were successful when they were able to create an ongoing heterosexual relationship within the legal contract of marriage. They were even overtly encouraged to postpone closure on their identity until they knew whom they would marry.[17] Upon marriage, they changed names, underlining the reality of the new identity formation. It was for most an outward sign of the beginning of their true career.

When women in their fifties and beyond are asked what they do for a living (or, more deeply, with their lives), they frequently answer, "I'm just a housewife." The key to that self-deprecating remark is the wife part. If wifehood is viewed as a vocation, when women are widowed they lose not only their spouse but also their occupation. It is telling to note that, although many widows still maintain their own homes, they almost never reply to the question, "What do you do?" with the answer, "I'm a housewife." It is as though their job were finished when their husbands died, even though they are actively performing their functions. Could this suggest that, for many women, housewifery counts only when there is a husband to be served by it? What should be the proper term for the housewife role once the husband is dead? Housewidow? Housekeeper? Homemaker? Perhaps this is the best term. However, "making a home" just for oneself is often considered a useless or self-centered vocation by our society. The truth is that without the husband in the home we do not have an accepted term to describe the widow's ongoing dedication to the home and the work within it. Thus, a traditionally reared woman who has viewed marriage and homemaking as her career and has invested a large part of her identity in these pursuits, finds in widowhood a double loss of status—loss of identity as a married woman and loss of vocational identity.

A third psychological factor that widows frequently experience is a loss of self-esteem. To the extent that a woman views marriage as symbolizing success in life and singlehood as the ultimate failure, widowhood moves her from the winner category to the loser category. Evidence that this is perceived by many women as a downward movement is seen in the fact that, as Barrett has observed, "widows have often disdained an association with divorcees,"[18] who appear to be their natural allies. It is almost as though widows, particularly older widows, do not want to be categorized with women who have experienced another kind of failure in the marriage market. Perhaps the fact that widows, unlike divorcees, acquire their perceived lower marital status by default influences them not to associate with divorcees. Divorced women also seem to share the bias that being widowed is more respectable than being divorced. Many who have been divorced for a number of years will reclassify themselves as widows when their ex-spouses die.

Another factor that may contribute to lower self-esteem in some widows is the fact that their spouses gave them vicarious power or status. This is best seen among the widows of military officers and politicians. In both situations, a woman accustomed to being treated with deference because of the rank or social position of her husband may be bewildered by a change in the attitudes of people around her after his death. One widow of an Air Force colonel told a woman's support group:

> I always had people around me. All the younger officers' wives seemed to enjoy my company. I was included in every woman's group there was. Our social life was, if anything, too full. I never questioned the invitations. I was sure it was my great personality and my willingness to help the younger wives that made me so welcome. As soon as Tim died, I found out what was really going on. Many of the younger officers' wives disappeared from my life entirely. They had been using our relationship as a way to try to help their husbands' careers. I'm afraid the whole experience has left me a little bitter.

AGE DIFFERENCES IN WIDOWHOOD

While widowhood presents some common problems for women of all ages, age-specific issues should also be considered. There are approximately 160,000 widowed women under the age of thirty-five in the United States.[19] These are the women who most often have dependent children living at home. They are also the ones least likely to receive insurance, an inheritance, or other financial benefits following their husbands' deaths. While today's younger woman is more likely than her older sister to have been trained for the work force, the job she held at the time of her spouse's death was probably not a major source of family income. Widows' incomes in 1980 averaged $12,380 compared to widowers' average of $17,246. Thus, the widow must simultaneously cope with looking for a better paying job, returning to school to enlarge her work options, a possible move from familiar surroundings, and her children's adjustment to the loss of their father. It is not surprising that young widows in one study reported higher levels of stress than older widows did.[20] Widows who were living with their children also reported significantly higher levels of stress than those who lived alone or who lived with their children and another adult. In a mobile society where child-care facilities are inadequate in both number and kind, young widowed mothers frequently experience ambivalence, anxiety, and guilt as they struggle with committing themselves to the role of major breadwinner. At least one other study has reported that younger widows experienced significantly stronger grief reactions than did middle-aged or older widows, perhaps because they had not had time to live out their youthful dreams of raising a family.[21] There is one bright spot in the picture for young widows who want to remarry. Breaking the general pattern of remarriage for widows, those under thirty tend to remarry at a very high rate. Six or seven years after widowhood, fully 93 percent of women who were widowed before the age of thirty were remarried, according to a 1977 Bureau of Census special report.[22]

Middle-aged and older widows also have age-specific problems. There are approximately 3,200,000 widows between thirty-five and sixty-five. In addition to dealing with the loss and the grief process, these widows may be facing problems characteristic of midlife. Many people in the middle years experience a change in the way they view time. They begin to dwell on the time left until death rather than on the time since birth.[23] This frequently accentuates the importance of time passing and the recognition that alternatives in life are greatly limited by the time remaining. Thus, while the younger widow may have problems creating a new life, she has time to explore options. Widows in the middle years frequently feel that it is too late for them to spend four or five years retraining for a vocation. They also realize that the odds are against their remarrying. Therefore, they may be discouraged, even depressed, as they contemplate their future. One widowed woman in her forty's told a group of students in a seminar, "My future is now my past." The way she said it left little doubt that she held hope for a satisfying life.

Two-thirds of all widows, over 7,200,000, are over sixty-five. This group of widows tends to be less educated, poorer, and more isolated than their younger counterparts. Their condition was eloquently summarized by Lopata, in a major study of older widows in the Chicago area in 1973:

> They are women in a male dominated society. They are old in a society that venerates youth. Many are grieving and lonely in a country that would deny and ignore such unhappy emotions. They are without mates in a social network of couples. Many are members of ethnic or racial groups and already face prejudice on that basis. They are poor in a wealthy land and they tend to be ignorant and uneducated in a society that increasingly demands knowledge and skills.[24]

Lopata found that higher education and socioeconomic levels were associated with better long-term adjustment among older widows. White, middle-class women found immediate adjustment to the loss of their husbands more difficult, however, because they had relied on them for companionship, and their social lives revolved around their husbands. Black women and lower-class white women in Lopata's sample were less dependent on their husbands for a social life but were paradoxically more socially isolated than the middle-class white women, who seemed to have more continuing friendships. Relatives did not provide much comfort or support for widows of any class or race. Only 31 percent of Lopata's sample agreed that brothers and/or sisters became much more important after they were widowed. Children provided relatively little companionship. Among the widows living alone, Lopata reported child contact on an average of less than once per month. However, her study did report that older widows experienced some satisfactions in widowhood, such as increased feelings of freedom, self-sufficiency, and independence.

IMPLICATIONS OF WIDOWHOOD FOR THE RESOCIALIZATION OF WOMEN

We began this article by asking, "Is the traditional socialization of women in our culture adaptive when considered in the light of the incidence, inevitability, and consequences of widowhood for today's woman?" Let us end it by summarizing the salient points. First, approximately one out of every eight women is a widow. Second, widows are far less likely to remarry than are widowers. Third, women tend to live an average of eight years longer than men. Fourth, women tend to marry men who are older than themselves, thus increasing the likelihood that they will spend the last decade of their lives alone. Fifth, far more widows than widowers live below the poverty level. Sixth, women tend to invest more in relationships than in vocations and to gain a large part of their sense of identity and vicarious power through their mates. Seventh, women have been socialized into passivity and dependence more than men have and thus have more difficulty initiating new lives upon widowhood. Eighth, women's self-esteem has traditionally been derived from their marital status, and widowhood has traditionally resulted in a loss of self-esteem. Ninth, in every group there are age-specific problems associated with widowhood.

It is clear that widowhood is an issue that affects more women than men. Evidence indicates that over the long term women are affected more severely than men financially, psychologically, sexually, and socially. Traditional socialization for dependence and passivity hinders women's attempts to adjust to widowhood and create new lives for themselves. The following are suggestions that might ameliorate the problem of widowhood and help women to be better prepared for the final decade of their lives:

1. Women should be encouraged to define themselves as individuals rather than as partners, to deemphasize vicarious identity formation.
2. Women's chosen work must be recognized as central to their identity both by women themselves and by society.
3. Financial independence, including separate retirement funds and expertise in fiscal responsibility, should be established by women at an early age.
4. Separate as well as shared social lives should be maintained throughout the marital period.
5. Women should develop close female relationships across the life span.
6. Emphasis should be placed on competence in many aspects of life rather than on specialization in traditional "women's work."
7. Education should discuss the likelihood of widowhood for women in our culture, increasing their awareness and individual preparation.
8. Acceptable social and cultural roles for widows, which maximize the reinforcers available and permit an alternative to the traditional identity of housewife, must be developed.

Some societies, notably those of Japan and China, have created positions of respect for women who are widowed, especially aged women. Support is accorded them according to their needs simply because they have fulfilled the honored role of wife and/or mother. Old Testament Jewish law required that the responsibility for widows be assumed by the nearest male relative, thus ensuring a continuation of the role of wife. Although widows in our society have the same valuable life experience and skills that widows elsewhere have, our society has not addressed in any organized manner the identity problems experienced by the growing numbers of widowed women.

The eight suggestions mentioned above are far easier to delineate than to implement. Changes as fundamental as those proposed will inevitably meet resistance. However, all change begins with awareness. Leaders in our society must become aware that most women will be widowed during their lifetimes. Following awareness, educational approaches must be designed by parents, schools, mental health centers, women's groups, and other institutions to promote a more wholesome view of widowed women. The extremes, from the "merry widow" stereotype to the "widow as second-class citizen," must be avoided. The still formidable resources of the women's movement can be mobilized to study and address this problem as a priority area for women today. Support groups dealing with loss and grief can be extended to include the special problems widows face and to address the topic of healthy reinvestment and reorganization after widowhood. Such support groups should become commonplace as widowhood comes to be an expected life event for women in our culture.

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A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE
EQUAL PARTNERSHIP IN MARRIAGE
SEXISM IS A SOCIAL DISEASE
equal work equal pay

PART FOUR

The Working Woman

FRANCINE D. BLAU

Women in the labor force: An overview

Men and women have traditionally engaged in three types of economically productive work. First, they have produced goods and services for their family's own consumption; second, they have engaged in household production of goods for sale or exchange on the market; third, they have worked for pay outside the home. The process of industrialization has brought about a reallocation in the relative importance of these three types of economic activitites, greatly increasing the absolute and relative number of men and women who seek and obtain paid employment. In this chapter we trace the evolution in the working woman's role, examine the status of women in the labor market in terms of their employment and earnings, and draw some conclusions regarding the changes that must be made in their employment patterns if women are to gain equality in the labor market.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

In the preindustrial economy of the American colonial period, work was frequently allocated on the basis of sex, but there could be little question that the work of women was as essential to the survival of the community as that of men. Unlike England and the Continental countries, where women were routinely employed as reapers, mowers, and haymakers, the colonies left their agricultural work mostly to the men, at least among the nonslave population.[1] This departure from the customs of Europe may have been due to the economic importance of the household industries carried on primarily by women and children, who produced most of the manufactured goods for the colonies. In addition to cleaning, cooking, and caring for their children, colonial women considered spinning, weaving, and making lace, soap, shoes, and candles part of their ordinary housekeeping duties, for the colonial economy at first provided no other source for these goods and services.[2]

The pressures of a struggling frontier society, a continual labor shortage, and a puritanical abhorrence of idleness opened up a wide range of business activities

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to women. They could be found working as tavern keepers, store managers, traders, speculators, printers, and publishers, as well as in the more traditional women's occupations of domestic servant, seamstress, and tailor.[3] However, many of the colonial businesswomen were widows, frequently with small children to provide for, who were carrying on their husbands' enterprises.[4] In some cases opportunities for women to remain single and self-supporting were curtailed, perhaps because of women's economic value in the home. For example, in early New England, female family heads were given their proportion of planting land, and in Salem even unmarried women at first also received a small allotment. "The custom of granting 'maid's lotts,' however, was soon discontinued in order to avoid 'all presedents and evil events of graunting lotts unto single maidens not disposed of.' "[5]

After the Industrial Revolution separated the home from the place of work, women generally played a less active role in the economic life in the community.[6] While the specific tasks of men and women may have differed before the Industrial Revolution, the basic economic roles of the two sexes were the same: the production of goods and services primarily to meet the family's own needs. But the broad thrust of industrialization diminished the relative status of women by creating a sexual division of labor in which, after marriage, women were responsible for home work and men were responsible for market work. Women thus became economically dependent on men, who were viewed as the breadwinners. However, American women played a crucial role in the development of our first important manufacturing industry, the textile industry.

During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when spinning and weaving were household industries done primarily by women and children, each household provided its own raw materials and produced chiefly to meet its own needs. Even at that time, it was not uncommon for women to market part of their output, selling it directly to customers or to shopkeepers for credit against their account.[7] With the expansion of the industry in the latter half of the eighteenth century, it became more common for women to be employed by merchants to spin yarn at home. Under this commission system, the merchants would sell the yarn or give it out again to be woven into cloth. The first factories in America embodied no new technology. They were "merely rooms where several looms were gathered and where a place of business could be maintained." Women delivered yarn they had spun at home to these establishments and were paid for it there.[8]

The first textile factory to incorporate power machinery was established in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1789 by Samuel Slater, a British immigrant. By 1800, fifteen mills had been established in New England for the carding and spinning of yarn. When the power loom was introduced in 1814, the whole process of cloth manufacture could be carried on in the new factories.[9] But cloth was still made primarily by young women and children, who constituted the bulk of the new industrial work force.

> The earliest factories did not open any new occupations to women. So long as [the factories] were only "spinning mills" there was merely a transferring of women's work

> from the home to the factory, and by the time that the establishment of the power loom had made weaving also a profitable factory operation, women had become so largely employed as weavers that they were only following this occupation, too, as it left the home. It may, in brief, be said that the result of the introduction of the factory system in the textile industries was that the work which women had been doing in the home could be done more efficiently outside of the home, but women were carrying on the same process in the making of yarn or cloth.[10]

Perhaps even more interesting than the pioneering role of women in the industry is the reaction of illustrious contemporaries to it. Alexander Hamilton, for example, claimed that one of the great advantages of the establishment of manufacturing was "the employment of persons who would otherwise be idle (and in many cases a burthen on the community). . . . It is worthy of particular remark, that, in general, women and children are rendered more useful, and the latter more early useful, by the manufacturing establishments, than they would otherwise be."[11] The notion that a farmer's masculinity might be threatened by the entry of his wife or children into paid employment apparently did not trouble American men of the time. Hamilton noted, on the contrary, that men would benefit from having a new source of income in the family.[12] Others claimed that the new factories not only opened up a new source of income but also built character in their employees:

> The rise of manufactures was said to have "elevated the females belonging to the families of the cultivators of the soil from a state of penury and idleness to competence and industry." . . . In the same spirit of unreasoning exaggeration the women in villages remote from manufacturing centers were described as "doomed to idleness and its inseparable attendants, vice and guilt."[13]

Since the economy of the United States during this period was predominantly agricultural, with an extremely high ratio of land to labor, women and children were virtually the only readily available sources of labor for the budding manufacturing industry. This was probably an important factor in the approval accorded the entry of women into the wage-labor force. The existence of a factor of production, women, that was more productive in the new industrial pursuits than in the home, was cited as an argument for the passage of protective tariffs to encourage the development of the textile industry in a country that appeared to have a clear comparative advantage in agriculture. "To the 'Friends of Industry,' as the early protectionists loved to call themselves, it was . . . a useful argument to be able to say that of all the employees in our manufacturing establishments not one fourth were ablebodied men fit for farming."[14]

Of course, later attitudes toward women working outside the home were not nearly as encouraging. While a careful investigation of the causes for this change remains to be undertaken, it seems reasonable to suggest that the gradual dwindling of the supply of unsettled land coupled with the waves of immigrants who provided a more abundant source of labor shifted public concern to the problem of providing sufficient employment for men. In any case, by the turn of the twentieth century sentiment against the "intrusion" of women into the industrial work force was strong enough to compel Edith Abbott to answer this charge specifically in her classic 1910 study *Women in Industry*. Her words add a valuable perspective to contemporary discussions of the issue.

> Women have been from the beginning of our history an important factor in American industry. In the early days of the factory system they were an indispensable factor. Any theory, therefore, that women are a new element in our industrial life, or that they are doing "men's work," or that they have "driven out the men," is a theory unsupported by the facts.[15]

A careful investigation of the facts also leads us to qualify the statement that the separation of home from workplace during the Industrial Revolution tended to reduce the participation of American women, particularly married women, in economically productive work. For one thing, though it is estimated that in 1890 only 5 percent of married women had jobs outside the home, [16] this pattern did not prevail among all groups of married women. For another, various types of work done in the home continued to be important in the economy throughout the nineteenth century.

The two major groups of married women for whom work outside the home was fairly common were black women, the majority of whom still lived in the South, and immigrant women in the textile-manufacturing towns of New England. In 1890 one-quarter of black wives and two-thirds of the large number of black widows were gainfully employed. Most of these women worked either as field hands or as domestic servants, the same kinds of jobs black women had always done under slavery.[17] The greater participation in market activity of black wives compared to white wives can most probably be explained by the relatively low incomes of black husbands.

The women who worked in the New England textile mills were carrying on the long tradition of women's participation in this industry. In two Massachusetts towns, Fall River and Lowell, for example, nearly one-fifth of all married women worked outside the home in 1890. Most were first- or second-generation immigrants of French-Canadian or Irish ancestry. The low wages of men working in the textile mills frequently made it necessary for other family members, including children, to work in the mills too. Thus, Robert Smuts has suggested that married women went to work for family reasons as well as financial ones: "Since many of the older children worked in the mills, mothers were not needed at home to care for them. Indeed, a mother whose children worked could look after them better if she went to work in the same mill."[18]

In addition to women from these two groups, married women from other sectors of the population were forced to seek market work when they suffered misfortunes against which there was little social protection in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some indication of the kinds of problems these women faced can be gained from a study conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1908.

> Among one group of 140 wives and widows who were employed in the glass industry, 94 were widows, or had been deserted, or were married to men who were permanently

disabled. Thirteen were married to drunkards or loafers who would not work. The husbands of ten were temporarily unable to work because of sickness or injury. Seventeen were married to unskilled laborers who received minimum wages for uncertain employment. Only six were married to regularly employed workers above the grade of unskilled labor.[19]

As noted earlier, some women contributed to the incomes of their families by earning money for work performed in their own homes. The types of employment and working conditions of this group varied widely. Some women took in boarders or did laundry or sewing. Others, in New York, Chicago, and other major cities, eked out a meager existence doing home work in the garment industry, while Bohemian and German women in New York's upper East Side tenements provided a cheap source of labor for the cigar industry.[20]

Another element of home work, the production of goods and services for the family's own use, remained extremely important throughout the nineteenth century, even in urban areas. Women frequently kept livestock and poultry and raised fruits and vegetables in small home gardens. Even foodstuffs bought at the market were usually in their natural, unprocessed form, so that preserving, pickling, canning, and jelly making, as well as baking the family bread, were normal household duties. Much of the family's clothing, curtains, and linens were sewn or knit in the home. And, of course, the housekeeping tasks of cleaning, washing, and cooking were all undertaken without the benefit of modern appliances.[21] In sum, women have consistently played a major role in the American economy.

THE LABOR FORCE SINCE 1890

While the process of industrialization took production of many goods and services out of the home and into the market, it also incorporated ever-increasing numbers of women into the paid labor force. Since fairly reliable data on the labor force did not become available until 1890, this discussion of the trends in male and female participation in the labor force will be confined to the period 1890–1982. The *labor force* includes all those who are working (employed) or actively seeking work (unemployed). A *labor force participation rate* for a particular group is equal to the number in the group who are in the labor force divided by the total number in the group who are of working age. Labor force participation rates for selected years since 1890 are shown in table 1. The figures indicate a relatively slow rate of increase in the proportion of women of working age who were in the labor force in the early decades of this period.[22] Between 1940 and 1982, however, more dramatic changes in women's labor force status occurred. In 1940, the labor force included 28 percent of the female population fourteen years of age and over. By March 1982 the figure had risen to 52 percent of those sixteen and over and 67 percent of women between the ages of twenty and fifty-four. Women workers increased from one-quarter to over two-fifths of the total labor force. When the impact of World War II is taken into account, however, these changes look less impressive. Between 1940 and 1945 the female labor force expanded by 5.1 million; 36 percent of all women fourteen years of age and over were working.

TABLE 1 *Labor force participation rates by sex, 1890–1982 (total labor force)*

Year	Labor force participation rates: Males	Labor force participation rates: Females	Females as a percentage of all workers
1890	84.3	18.2	17.0
1900	85.7	20.0	18.1
1920	84.6	22.7	20.4
1930	82.1	23.6	21.9
1940	82.5	27.9	25.2
1945	87.6	35.8	29.2
1947	86.8	31.8	27.4
1950	86.8	33.9	28.8
1955	86.2	35.7	30.2
1960	84.0	37.8	32.3
1965	81.5	39.3	34.0
1970	80.6	43.4	36.7
1975	78.5	46.4	39.1
1978	78.4	50.1	41.0
1982	77.2	52.7	42.7

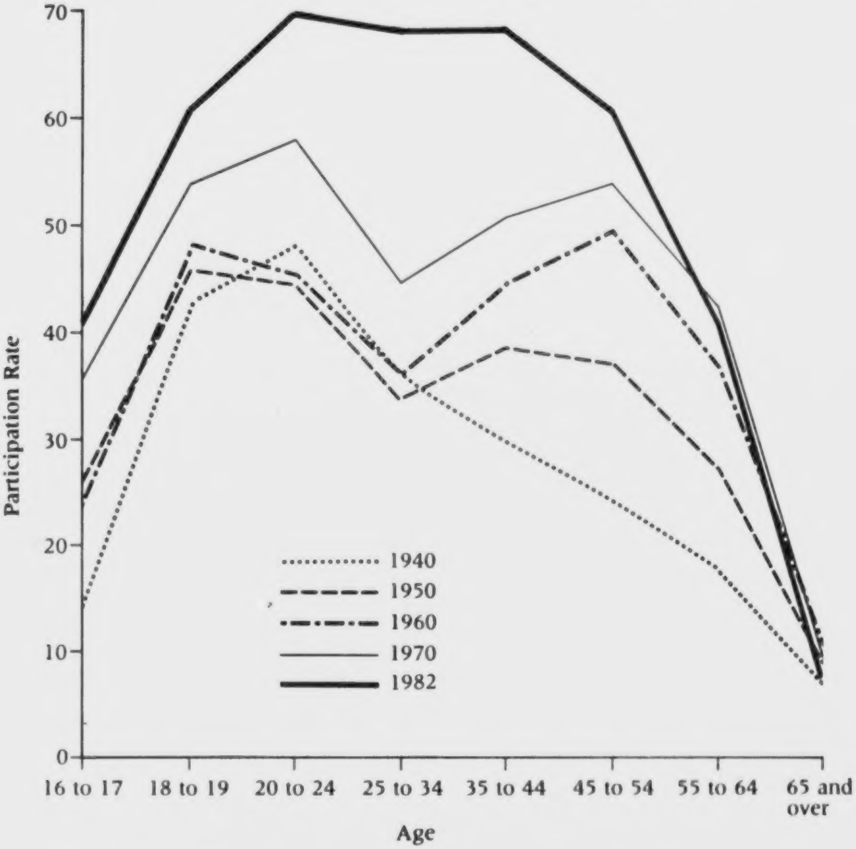
Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970,* Bicentennial ed., Part 1 (1975), pp. 131–132; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* (January 1983), pp. 144–45; U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, *Employment and Training Report of the President* (1981), pp. 119–20.

Note: Figures for 1947 and after include persons sixteen years old and over; for the years prior to 1947, those fourteen and over are included.

As the 1947 figures indicate, considerable ground was lost in the immediate postwar period. However, in the succeeding years, these losses were eventually recouped and the war-time levels were exceeded.

The long-term growth in the female labor force since 1940 was accomplished primarily by the entry of new groups of women into the labor market. Before 1940 the typical female worker was young and single. The peak participation rate for 1940 occurred among women twenty to twenty-four years of age, as figure 1 shows. In the next twenty years older married women entered or reentered the labor force in increasing numbers, while the labor force participation rates of women between twenty and thirty-four years of age remained relatively constant. Married women comprised 30 percent of the female labor force in 1940 and 54 percent in 1960. Since 1960 there has been a sizable increase in the participation rates of all women under sixty-five. The fastest increase, however, has occurred among women aged twenty to thirty-four. The increase in participation rates for this group has been tied to a decline in the birthrate and an increase in the divorce rate over this period. Most notable, however, has been the large increase in the labor force participation rate of married women with preschool-age children, from 18.6 percent in 1960 to 47.8 percent in 1981.[23] These shifts in the composition of the female work force suggest that the increases in women's participation

FIGURE 1 Civilian labor force participation rates of women by age, 1940–82



Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, *Employment and Earnings* (Jan. 1983), p. 144; and U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, *1975 Handbook on Women Workers*, p. 12.

rates have been associated with an increase in the *stability* of women's participation in market work. Indeed, the data indicate that the propensity of women to exit from the labor force has declined in recent years. In other words, the increasing labor force attachment (or stability of employment) of women has been a major factor in the growth in their participation rates.[24]

As a result of these increases in married women's labor force participation, the two-earner family is increasingly the norm among married couples. Families in which only the husband earned income comprised only 27 percent of married-couple families with earnings in 1981, while those in which both the husband and wife earned income comprised 59 percent. (The categories comprising the remaining 14 percent were families in which only the wife earned income; families in which only another relative earned income; and families in which another relative and the husband earned income.) Now 54 percent of American children have mothers who work outside the house.[25]

A variety of factors explain the growth in women's, particularly married women's, labor force participation during the post-1940 period. Some economists, such as Jacob Mincer, argue that the rising real (inflation-adjusted) wages available to married women in the labor market have increased the *opportunity cost* of nonmarket activities for them. In other words, the income that women forgo by remaining out of the labor force has increased over time. This has encouraged married women to substitute market work for time spent on housework and leisure—a positive *substitution effect.* On the other hand, increases in the real wages of their husbands occurring at the same time have worked to increase married women's demand for leisure and to reduce their labor force participation (a negative *income effect*). The evidence suggests that the positive substitution effect outweighs the negative income effect and that married women have continued to seek work in increasing numbers despite their husbands' rising real incomes.[26]

Sociologist Valerie Oppenheimer has pointed out that the growing importance of service industries and white-collar work has provided greatly expanded employment opportunities for women, within the framework of the sexually segregated labor market. Moreover, the increase in these jobs, coupled with the appearance of new female occupations between 1940 and 1960, created a demand that greatly exceeded the supply of young, single, women workers, once the backbone of the female labor force. Thus, as Oppenheimer concludes:

> The combination of the rising demand for female labor and the declining supply of the typical worker opened up job opportunities for married women and older women that had not previously existed. . . . The great influx of older married women into the labor force was, in good part, a *response* to increased job opportunities—not the creator of such opportunities.[27]

Oppenheimer also points out that, under the pressures of labor shortages, employers were forced to abandon their prejudices against employing older married women. Further research may show that a similar process has operated to the benefit of young married women in the period since 1960. There is some evidence that employers have been reluctant to hire married women with young children, either because they feared such women would have high rates of absenteeism or because they made a moralistic judgment that mothers of preschool children should remain at home.[28] Some employers may have been forced to discard these concerns in order to meet their demand for female labor, thus making possible the rapid increase in the labor force participation of women in this group.

Other factors have contributed to the rise in women's participation rates. Social norms have changed, and women's attitudes toward market work have become more favorable. The market has increasingly provided many of the goods and services women used to produce in the home. Further, since the early 1960s, demographic trends such as declining birthrates and increasing divorce rates have stimulated a rise in participation rates. But it is important to point out that these factors may be *consequences* as well as *causes* of the rise in women's involvement in market work.

At the same time as female participation rates have been increasing, those of men have been declining. As shown in table 1, the male participation rate fell from about 87 percent in 1950 to 77 percent in 1982. This decline has occurred at both ends of the male age-distribution, as more young men remain in school and more older men retire from the labor force. As a result of these opposing trends in labor force participation for men and women, the sex differential in labor force participation rates has declined in recent years.

WHICH WOMEN WORK

Primary determinants of a woman's decision to enter the labor force are the availability and level of alternative sources of income. It is primarily for this reason that women who are married, with husbands present, are less likely to work outside the home than single, separated, or divorced women (see table 2). The low labor force participation rate of widowed women is largely due to their higher average age. Further, within the married-with-husband-present group, participation is negatively related to husband's income, all other factors being equal.

Another factor that influences women's participation is the presence of children. Within each marital-status category, as shown in table 2, women with small children are less likely to participate in the labor force, since children greatly increase the value of time spent within the home. It is somewhat surprising that, within each marital-status category, women with no children under eighteen are less likely to be in the labor force than those with school-age children. However, this reflects the higher average age of women in those categories, since in most cases they are older women whose children are grown.

Education is another major determinant of labor force participation. Among women who were twenty-five to sixty-four in March 1982, 49 percent of those with less than four years of high school were in the labor force, in comparison to

TABLE 2 *Labor force participation rates of women sixteen and over by marital status and age of children, 1982*

			With children under 18	
Marital status	Total	No children under eighteen	Children six to seventeen only	Children under six
Never married	62.2	63.4	64.0	45.2
Married, husband present	51.2	46.2	63.2	48.7
Married, husband absent	60.0	59.5	68.4	55.2
Widowed	22.2	19.3	53.9	43.3
Divorced	74.9	71.6	83.6	67.2

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished data.

62 percent of those with four years of high school and 76 percent of those with four or more years of college.[29] A similar relationship between education and participation is present among married women. Among both male and female workers, educational attainment generally affects employment opportunities and pay scales. Although the educated woman often meets with discrimination that keeps her from better paid, more prestigious jobs, her opportunities are still greater than those of a less educated woman. Thus, the more education a woman has, the higher the *opportunity cost* (the level of her forgone earnings) for her to remain out of the paid labor force. The attraction of market work is therefore greater for more educated women. The correlation between educational attainment and employment may also reflect a process of self-selection; those women who earn diplomas may be more strongly motivated, ambitious, and career-oriented than those who do not.

Proportionately more black women than white participate in the labor force, although the differential has been declining in recent years. In 1948, 31 percent of all white women and 46 percent of all nonwhite women sixteen and over were working. By 1980, 51 percent of white women and 53 percent of nonwhite women were in the labor force. On the other hand, the participation rate of Hispanic women, 48 percent, was less than that of white women. The gap between the participation rates of Hispanic and white women has grown slightly wider in recent years.[30]

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

The dramatic shifts in women's work outside the home do not appear to have been accompanied by an equally impressive improvement in the relative economic status of women workers. As seen in table 3, the distribution of female and male workers by major occupation group reveals striking differences. Further analysis of these figures shows that, in 1982, 71 percent of male white-collar workers (31 percent of all working men) were in either professional/technical or managerial jobs, whereas only 38 percent of female white-collar workers (25 percent of all working women) were in these categories. Furthermore, while a somewhat higher proportion of women than men were employed as professional or technical workers, over half of the women in this category were concentrated in the traditionally female fields of librarian; registered nurse; preschool, elementary, or secondary school teacher; and social worker.[31] A substantial 52 percent of female white-collar workers (34 percent of all employed women) were working in clerical jobs.

.Since 1960 women have been entering the skilled trades at a faster rate than men. Yet men continue to hold a disproportionate share of the highest status, highest paying blue-collar jobs. Only 16 percent of women blue-collar workers (1.9 percent of employed women) were craft and kindred workers in 1982. Yet 47 percent of the men in this group (20 percent of the male labor force) were categorized as craft and kindred workers.

While there has been considerable improvement in the occupational status of nonwhite men and nonwhite women workers in recent years, their employment distribution remains skewed toward the lower rungs of the occupational ladder.

TABLE 3 Occupational distribution of the labor force by sex and race, 1982

	Percentage of employed labor force					
	Males			Females		
Major occupation group	Total	White	Nonwhite	Total	White	Nonwhite
White-collar workers[a]	43.9	45.4	31.4	66.5	68.5	52.5
Professional and technical workers	16.5	17.0	12.7	17.7	18.0	15.7
Managers and administrators (except farm)	14.7	15.6	7.4	7.4	8.0	3.9
Clerical workers	6.3	6.1	8.4	34.4	35.1	29.7
Salespeople	6.4	6.8	2.9	6.9	7.4	3.3
Blue-collar workers[a]	42.8	42.0	48.8	12.8	12.1	17.1
Craft and kindred workers	20.3	20.8	15.9	2.0	2.1	1.5
Operatives, excluding transport	9.9	9.5	13.5	8.9	8.2	13.5
Transport equipment operatives	5.5	5.2	7.6	0.7	0.7	0.7
Nonfarm laborers	7.1	6.5	11.8	1.2	1.2	1.5
Service workers[a]	9.3	8.4	17.1	19.7	18.1	29.7
Private household workers	0.1	([b])	0.2	2.3	1.9	5.4
Other	9.2	8.3	16.9	17.3	16.3	24.4
Farm workers[a]	4.0	4.1	2.7	1.1	1.2	0.6
Farmers and farm managers	2.3	2.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.1
Farm laborers and foremen	1.7	1.7	2.3	0.7	0.7	0.5

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, *Employment and Earnings* (Jan. 1983), p. 157.

[a] Figures may not add to totals because of rounding.

[b] Less than 0.05 percent.

They are both less likely than whites to be employed in white-collar occupations and more likely to be in service jobs. Nonwhite males are also considerably less likely than white males to be employed as professional or technical workers, managers, officials or proprietors, or to be in craft or kindred jobs.

Examination of the detailed occupational distribution of male and female employees highlights two aspects of the position of women in the labor market. First, women workers are heavily concentrated in an extremely small number of occupations. Half of all working women were employed in just seventeen of the four hundred detailed occupations listed by the Bureau of the Census in 1975. Just five occupations—secretary, bookkeeper, elementary school teacher, waitress, and retail sales clerk—accounted for one-quarter of all employed women. Men workers were much more widely distributed throughout the occupational structure, with half of them employed in sixty-three occupations.

Second, a high degree of occupational segregation by sex exists in the labor market. That is, men tend to work in predominantly male jobs and women tend to work in predominantly female jobs. The degree of sex segregation may be measured by constructing an "index of segregation" based on the percentage of women (or men) in the labor force who would have to change jobs in order for the occupational distribution of women workers to match that of men. This index was 65.8 in 1970, the most recent year for which census data have been analyzed.[32] The degree of sex segregation actually increased slightly between 1950 and 1960 as predominantly female clerical and professional jobs grew in relative size. Between 1960 and 1970, an inflow of men into female professions and of women into male sales and clerical jobs produced a modest drop in the segregation index of 3.1 percentage points.[33] Another analysis, based on data from the Current Population Survey, a sample survey undertaken monthly by the Commerce Department, indicates that the index fell from 68.3 in 1972 to 61.7 in 1981, a decline of 6.6 percentage points, as women increased their share of traditionally male managerial and professional jobs.[34] (The *levels* of segregation computed from the two data sources are not comparable.) Thus, the figures indicate that while the magnitude of segregation remains substantial, some declines in the amount of segregation have occurred in the post-1960 period.

The aggregate figures do not, however, reveal the full extent of employment segregation by sex. The sex-typing of a job may vary from one business establishment to another. One firm may hire only men as elevator operators, while another may hire only women; many restaurants employ either waiters or waitresses, but not both. A recent study of employment patterns of male and female office workers in three large northeastern cities revealed a strong and consistent pattern of sex segregation by business establishments among workers employed in the same occupational categories. Men tended to be disproportionately represented at firms that paid higher wages across-the-board to both male and female employees, while women tended to be concentrated in the relatively low-paying firms.[35]

EARNINGS

The median earnings of women who worked year-round and full-time was 64 percent of that of men in 1955 and fell to 59 percent in 1981. Much of this decline had occurred by the early 1960s, and the pay gap has fluctuated in the range of 57 to 60 percent since that time.[36] Sex differences in educational attainment do not explain this large pay gap. Even within educational categories women earn substantially less than men. For example, in 1981, among those with four years of high school, the median income of full-time, year-round women workers was 60 percent that of men, while among those with four or more years of college it was 63 percent.[37] Nor are these earnings differentials by sex primarily due to sex differences in major occupation groups. In 1981, the median income of full-time, year-round women workers was 64 percent of that of men for professional and technical workers; 58 percent for managers, officials, and proprietors; 62 percent for clerical workers; 50 percent for sales workers; 64 percent for craft and kindred workers; 61 percent for operatives; and 58 percent for service workers.[38]

Since earnings are tied directly to both work experience and job tenure, the intermittent labor force participation of many women workers and their shorter average length of time in the labor force and on a particular job would lead us to expect lower median earnings for them than for men workers.[39] For example, for workers aged eighteen to sixty-four in 1975, average years of experience prior to present job were 8.1 for white women, 9.3 for black women, 11.3 for white men, and 10.4 for black men. Average years of tenure in the present job were 5.8 for white women, 6.5 for black women, 8.8 for white men, and 8.1 for black men.[40] However, the sex differential in earnings exceeds what could be expected to result from sex differentials in experience and tenure. A growing body of research into the question of male–female pay differences supports the view that discrimination accounts for a significant share of the differential—probably over half.[41] This is impressive, because newly available data sets have permitted researchers to control for a wide array of productivity-related factors in reaching this conclusion, including formal education, work history, and labor force attachment.

Discriminatory pay differentials are probably related to the sex segregation of the labor market discussed in the preceeding section. At the risk of some oversimplification, the effect of segregation on women's earnings can be explained in terms of supply and demand. Partly because of discrimination, and partly because of sex differences in socialization and preferences, women have tended to "crowd" into a small number of sex-segregated occupations. The abundance of supply relative to demand results in lower earnings for women's jobs.[42]

One of the puzzles in the study of women's economic position is the widening of the male–female pay gap over the past twenty-five years in the face of increasing labor force attachment (stability of employment) among women and an impressive array of federal antibias laws and regulations during the post-1964 period. However, as we have seen, little decline has occurred in the degree of sex segregation in employment during this time, while female labor force participation increased dramatically. If increases in the demand for labor in female jobs have not been keeping pace with increases in the supply of female labor, relative "crowding" in female jobs may have been worsening, exerting a downward pressure on female wages relative to male wages. Further, high-level male jobs require substantial experience and training.[43] This makes it difficult for equal employment opportunity legislation to open the doors to such jobs for older women. Thus, we would expect younger women to be the primary beneficiaries of these policies. This points to the basically optimistic conclusion that the overall position of women relative to men will improve as these women age. There is some support for this view, in that younger women have been increasing their earnings position relative to younger men. Between 1970 and 1981, the ratio of the median incomes of full-time, year-round women workers to those of men increased from 59 to 60 percent for all women, but rose from 65 percent to 70 percent among those twenty-five to thirty-four years old.[44] However, these modest gains by younger women do not yet provide overwhelming support for this view. Much will depend on how this group fares in the next few years. It is also important to point out that employers willing to reevaluate their traditional promotion ladders might find that many older women workers do have the experience necessary for higher level positions.

During recent years, while women as a group have made little progress in advancing their earnings positions relative to men, black women have advanced relative to white women. Their median full-time, year-round incomes have increased from 69 percent of those of white women in 1964 to 90 percent in 1981. Black men have also gained relative to white men. Their median full-time, year-round incomes rose from 66 percent of those of white men in 1964 to 71 percent in 1981.[45] The gains in the relative incomes of blacks are partially due to substantial increases in their relative educational attainment, but they cannot be fully explained by that factor.[46] These gains may in part be due to the impact of equal employment opportunity legislation. The more rapid improvement in the relative income position of black women may reflect the large number of entry-level positions in many typically female jobs, in comparison to the higher experience and training requirements in typically male jobs.

Some argue that women do not need to earn as much as men and hence that the low earning power of working women is not a significant social problem. Single women who work are only biding their time before marriage, the argument goes, and married women are only supplementing their husbands' already ample incomes. The assumptions underlying this view—that single women do not need to make a living wage or to be able to save for the future, and that all husbands earn enough to provide adequately for their wives and children—are left unexamined.

One indicator of the extent to which market work is an economic necessity for women in the labor force is the substantial portion of women who are either primarily responsible for their own support or who are maintaining families. In March 1982, 45 percent of women workers were single, widowed, divorced, or separated from their husbands, and 13 percent of working women were maintaining families.[47] One in six American families was headed solely by a woman; two in five black families and one in five Hispanic families were headed by women.[48] Such families constitute a large and growing proportion of the poverty population. In 1981, 35 percent of the families maintained by women lived in poverty, in comparison to only 7 percent of married-couple families. Over half of the families maintained by black or Hispanic women had incomes below the poverty line in 1981.[49]

The contributions of married women are often of critical importance to the welfare of their families. The median contribution of a wife's earnings to family income in 1978 was 25 percent among white families and 33 percent among black families.[50] As women's labor force attachment increases, growing numbers of married-couple families have come to rely on the contribution of the working wife to assure their standard of living. To justify the lower earnings of married women workers on the grounds that they are only "secondary" earners (that is, their contribution is smaller than their husbands') is to use the very earnings difference as its own justification.

While it is important to show that work is a financial necessity for most women, two additional points need to be made. First, in a society in which value often means monetary value, it is extremely unlikely that women can attain "equality," however that may be defined, without equal earning opportunities. Second, a significant change in women's social status will require the possibility of real economic independence for women, not simply the opportunity for low-income employment.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

Because we are in a period of less than full employment, the question is often raised whether the economy can generate enough jobs to absorb the anticipated increase in the number of women seeking work. The economy's ability to provide employment for a larger female work force depends on two factors. The first is the aggregate level of economic activity. Thus, it is extremely important that full employment be made a national goal of the highest priority and that the government pursue measures to assure a full-employment economy in the coming years.

Second, since women are heavily concentrated in a limited number of occupational categories, the ability of women to find employment depends not only on the aggregate number of jobs available but on the structure of demand as well. Bureau of Labor Statistics projections of the occupational distribution of the work force in 1990 indicate that the structure of demand will continue to favor the employment of women, even if the present uneven distribution of women among occupations persists into the future. Above-average rates of increase in employment are anticipated in the professional and technical, clerical, and service categories that accounted for 71 percent of women's jobs in 1981.[51]

The aggregate statistics conceal certain problem areas, however. For example, employment in preschool, elementary, and secondary teaching, in which 31 percent of all professional women were engaged in 1981, is not expected to grow rapidly. The bureau's projections indicate that jobs for secondary teachers are expected to decrease somewhat, due to the low birth rates during the 1960s and 1970s. A small increase in the demand for preschool, kindergarten, and elementary teachers is anticipated, reflecting recent increases in the number of births, as the baby boom cohort enters the prime childbearing ages.[52] Such an increase in the *number* of births may occur even if *rates* of birth for this group remain relatively low.

Shifts in demand are not unusual in a dynamic and changing economy. Under conditions of full employment, the decline in the need for teachers would be offset by expanding employment opportunities in other areas. However, given the sex segregation of the labor market and the long period of training required for most professional jobs, this shift in demand could pose serious problems for college-educated women. If no efforts are made to encourage a substantial change in the types of training acquired by women at the college and graduate levels, the consequence could well be serious underemployment of college-trained women. If, in the absence of sufficient professional opportunities, women college graduates begin to compete for jobs that have in the past been held by women with less education, the latter group will be adversely affected as well. Fortunately, recent indications are that college majors are becoming less segregated by sex, as women move into new areas.[53]

While the trend toward a service economy and white-collar employment does not in general indicate a worsening of the economic position of women, it does not necessarily imply an improvement. Lower earnings and higher unemployment rates will probably continue to plague the female work force as long as occupational segregation by sex persists. For this reason, the goal of equal employment opportunity is crucial to the economic welfare of women.

The evidence presented in this article suggests that, until women have more occupational mobility, it is extremely unlikely that the pay differentials between female and male workers will be substantially reduced. Although it is not possible to predict exactly what the distribution of female employment would be if there were complete equality of opportunity in the labor market, it is reasonable to expect that women would be much more evenly distributed throughout the occupational structure.

An assessment of the future prospects of women in the labor market would be incomplete without some consideration of the impact of the level of unemployment on women's economic status. The adverse effect of periods of high unemployment on women cannot be overemphasized. First, since the unemployment rate is generally higher for women than for men, women bear a disproportionate share of unemployment. Second, in times of high unemployment, many women become discouraged and drop out of the labor force; others postpone their entry until economic conditions improve. The incidence of this kind of "hidden unemployment" is considerably higher among women than among men. Finally, the level of unemployment will undoubtedly affect the social acceptance of programs designed to increase the opportunities for women in what are presently predominantly male jobs.

An unavoidable consequence of the effort to expand employment opportunities for women is that men will face a new source of competition. Thus, some men may find that they are unable to obtain employment in their preferred occupation. Under conditions of full employment, however, they can always find employment elsewhere. Further, a full-employment economy combined with a new occupational mobility for women workers would tend to reduce earnings differentials between jobs that were once predominantly male or female. Thus, the price paid by men for being unable to enter the occupation of their choice might not prove very great. On the other hand, during a period of high unemployment, public support for a fundamental change in women's employment status may diminish. Moreover, since it is the new jobs that emerge in a growing, healthy economy that are most likely to become available to women, the maintenance of full employment is important if we are to move *rapidly* toward the goal of economic equality for women.

NOTES

1. Edith Abbott, *Women in Industry* (New York: Appleton, 1910), 11–12.
2. Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States* (New York: Atheneum, 1968), 9.
3. Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 13–18. "It should be noted that the domestic servant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was employed for a considerable part of her time

in processes of manufacture and that, without going far wrong, one might classify this as an industrial occupation." Ibid., p. 16.

4. Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 9.
5. Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 11–12.
6. Viola Klein and Alva Myrdal, *Women's Two Roles* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), 1.
7. Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 18–19.
8. Ibid., p. 19, and for quote, 37.
9. Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, *Technology and Women's Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 5.
10. Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 14.
11. Alexander Hamilton, *Report on Manufactures*, vol. 1, cited in Baker, *Technology*, 6.
12. Hamilton, *Report on Manufactures*, cited in Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 50.
13. Abbott, *Women in Industry*, 57.
14. Ibid., 51. The same author noted (52, n. 1) that "manufactures are lauded because of their 'subserviency to the public defense; their employment of women and children, machinery, cattle, fire, fuel, steam, water, and even wind—instead of our ploughmen and male laborers.' "
15. Ibid., 317.
16. Robert W. Smuts, *Women and Work in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 23.
17. Ibid., 10, 56.
18. Ibid., 57.
19. Ibid., 51.
20. Ibid., 14–17.
21. Ibid., 11–13.
22. There is some question whether there was any increase at all in female labor force participation during the 1900–1930 period. The 1910 census, in which census takers were given special instructions not to overlook women workers, especially unpaid family workers, yielded a participation rate of 25 percent (slightly higher than the 1930 figure shown in table 1). Robert W. Smuts has argued that women workers were undercounted in the 1900, the 1920, and perhaps the 1930 censuses as well but that, over the period, gradual improvements in technique, broader definitions of labor force status, and a redistribution of the female work force from unpaid farm work to paid employment resulted in an apparent rather than a true increase in the female participation rate. Robert W. Smuts, "The Female Labor Force," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 55 (Mar. 1960), 71–79. For a discussion of this issue, see Valerie Kincade Oppenheimer, *The Female Labor Force in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1970), 3–5.
23. U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, *Manpower Report of the President* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1975); U.S. Department of Labor, *News Release* 81–522 (1981), table 2.
24. Nancy Barrett, "Women in the Job Market: Unemployment and Work Schedules," in *The Subtle Revolution, Women at Work*, ed. Ralph Smith (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute, 1979) 72.
25. U.S. Department of Labor, *News Release*, 82–276 (1982), table 3; U.S. Department of Labor, *News Release*, 81–522 (1981), table 1.
26. Jacob Mincer, "Labor Force Participation of Married Women," in *Aspects of Labor Economics*, National Bureau of Economic Research (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962), 63–97.

27. Oppenheimer, *Female Labor Force*, 187.
28. See, for example, Georgina M. Smith, *Help Wanted—Female: A Study of Demand and Supply in a Local Job Market for Women* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University, Institute of Management and Labor Relations, 1964), 18–19.
29. U.S. Department of Labor, *News Release*, 82–276 (1982), table 1.
30. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment in Perspective: Working Women: Summary 1980*, Report no. 643 (1981), 2.
31. U.S. Department of Labor, *Employment and Earnings* (Jan. 1983), p. 157.
32. Francine Blau and Wallace Hendricks, "Occupational Segregation by Sex: Trends and Prospects," *Journal of Human Resources* 14 (spring 1979), 200.
33. Ibid., 201–2.
34. Andrea Beller, "Trends in Occupational Segregation by Sex: 1960–1990," report submitted to the National Academy of Sciences, Committee on Women's Employment and Related Social Issues, July 1982.
35. Francine D. Blau, *Equal Pay in the Office* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington, Heath, 1977).
36. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1981 (Advance Report)*, Current Population Reports Series P-60, no. 134 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, July 1982), table 7, pp. 13–14; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *U.S. Working Women: A Databook*, Bulletin no. 1977 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), table 37, p. 35.
37. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Money Income and Poverty Status*, table 7, pp. 13–14.
38. Ibid.
39. Jacob Mincer and Solomon Polachek, "Family Investments in Human Capital: Earnings of Women," *Journal of Political Economy* 82 (Mar./Apr. 1974, part 2), S76–S108. In addition, women who work full-time tend to work fewer hours than full-time male workers, on the average. For the effect of adjustment for this factor on the earnings differential, see *Economic Report of the President* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 104.
40. Mary Corcoran and Greg J. Duncan, "Work History, Labor Force Attachment, and Earnings Differences between the Races and Sexes," *Journal of Human Resources* 14 (winter 1979), 3–20.
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42. Barbara R. Bergmann, "Occupational Segregation, Wages and Profits When Employers Discriminate by Race or Sex," *Eastern Economic Journal* 1 (Apr., July 1974), 103–10. See also Francine D. Blau, "Women's Place in the Labor Market," *American Economic Review* 62 (May 1972), 161–66.
43. This argument is based on points made in reference to black–white pay and occupational differentials by sex in Richard Freeman, "Changes in the Labor Market for Black Americans, 1948–1972," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, no. 1 (1973), 67–131.
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47. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *News Release* 86–276 (1982), tables 4, 5.
48. Ibid., table 3.
49. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Money Income and Poverty Status*, table 14, p. 21.
50. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Marital and Family Characteristics of the Labor Force, March 1979*, Special Labor Force Report no. 237 (Jan. 1981), table K, pp. A–35, A–36.
51. Max L. Carey, "Occupational Employment Growth through 1990," *Economic Projections to 1990*, Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin no. 2121 (Mar. 1982), 35–38.
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53. Beller, "Trends in Occupational Segregation."

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Clerical work: The female occupation

Every weekday, from nine in the morning until five in the evening, in offices all over the country, accounts are checked, correspondence typed, inventories tallied, bills prepared, appointments booked, records filed, and documents reproduced. This "paper work" is carried out in small offices of one or two persons and in corporate headquarters with hundreds of workers, in private industry and in public agencies. Some of the people are all-around workers, carrying out a myriad of different activities each day; others are single-function clerks, repeating the same small task over and over. Some work with paper, pencil, and perhaps a typewriter; others work with electronic equipment linking them to a computer system that automatically handles many complex clerical operations.

The five most frequently found titles among the 18 million people engaged in clerical activities are secretary, bookkeeper, cashier, typist, and receptionist. These five account for nearly half of all clerical workers, but there are numerous other titles classified as "clerical and kindred," including bank teller, estimator and enumerator, stock clerk, computer operator, counter clerk, keypuncher, telephone operator, and file clerk.

All of them are engaged in what is called *white-collar* work (to contrast it with blue-collar manual labor). Features that have traditionally characterized clerical occupations include the following: the work is "clean"—it takes place indoors in relatively safe, clean, and comfortable surroundings and involves no great physical exertion; it is "mental"—it relies to some extent on a worker's judgment and requires a literate work force that is able to read, write, and manipulate symbols; it lacks a distinctive product—its outcome is not a concrete commodity but a flow of documents and communication. In addition, the clerical worker has traditionally enjoyed certain advantages in work life over the factory employee: a fixed weekly salary rather than hourly wages, more regular hours, greater job security, smaller fluctuations in salary during hard times, and greater opportunities for advancement.[1] These supposed advantages have conferred on clerical work a

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status above blue-collar, sales, and service occupations. At the same time, those in the other white-collar occupations—managers and professionals—have looked down on clerical work as more routine, offering less scope for independent decisions. In addition, the workers' hours, movements, and work patterns are subject to closer controls. Although there have been many changes (which will be described later), these features are still prominent in popular conceptions of clerical work.

CLERICAL WORK AS A FEMALE OCCUPATION

Aside from the work itself, the most distinctive feature of clerical work is the gender of the people who do it: they are overwhelmingly female. In the United States in 1980, four out of five clerical workers (80.5 percent) were women. In two of the largest categories, secretaries and typists, the proportions rose to 99.1 percent and 96.6 percent. Overall, 14.9 million women were engaged in clerical work in 1981. Over one-third (34.8 percent) of all employed women were in this category.[2] Clerical work is therefore, absolutely and proportionally, the largest single occupation for women. The degree to which clerical work is common to women was confirmed by a personal experience. Recently, in an all-female discussion section of a sex-roles course, the instructors asked how many students have ever done office work. Out of twenty-five women present, twenty-three raised their hands, including the two instructors.

Considering these numbers and percentages, it can be argued that clerical work represents the prototypical female employment experience. We shall explore this tie between women and clerical work by examining a set of interrelated questions: How did clerical work become a large and predominantly female occupation? How has the concentration of women in this occupation affected wages, status, and working conditions? What has been the impact of economic and organizational changes on the role and function of clerical work? What effects have these factors had on the quality of work life for this group of women workers? What is the outlook for, and what are the possible outcomes of, organizing clerical workers? What form might a largely woman-based organizing movement take?

In addressing these questions, the following line of argument will be developed. There have been two seemingly contradictory trends in clerical work. The increased size and complexity of organizations mean that internal control, coordination, and communications become increasingly critical for organizational survival. Since these activities rely largely on clerical labor, clerical work takes on a more central role in the economy. But, while clerical work has become more important, organizations have pushed toward streamlining and mechanizing the work to increase efficiency in and control over the work process. This has degraded the work, lowered the status of clerical workers, and further restricted opportunities for advancement. Thus clerical workers as a group have become a large and important part of the economy, while their jobs and status have become less desirable. The combination of these two trends can be expected to strengthen the impetus for workers to organize—to use the untapped power of clerical workers as leverage to improve their wages and conditions relative to other groups.

THE FEMINIZATION OF CLERICAL WORK

The office set-up of a typical large organization is structured in the following way. At the top, occupying the highest positions, are the officers and top managers, all men. Each has at least one private secretary and/or administrative assistant. Below them are other managers, mostly men, graded into many levels. Several of them may share the services of a single secretary or call on a pool of typists and/or clerks. Below them are several specialized sections, divided according to function—for example, accounting, billing, and inventory control. Each section has many women clerks engaged in the routine tasks of record-keeping, coding and processing information, and communication. The supervisor of each section is frequently a woman promoted from the ranks. In addition, there may be a photocopy or reproduction unit made up of a mixed group of young men and women and a data-processing unit where women operators enter information into the computer system via electronic terminals. An office manager, usually a man, may be responsible for overall office administration. Most large organizations also have a separate computer department, consisting of computer operators, programmers, and systems analysts who oversee the operations of the centralized data system.

In short, there are three separate groups of office jobs differing in gender composition. One group, the clerical, is clearly female (secretaries, typists, data-entry operators); the second, the managerial, is clearly male (vice-president, product manager, sales manager); the third, the technical, is mixed-sex (computer operators, programmers, and systems analysts). Furthermore, each group of jobs is organized into a hierarchy that is also sex-typed.[3] Management is a male hierarchy, although it frequently includes female supervisors at the lowest levels. The clerical staff is largely a female hierarchy. The technical category is also gender-stratified, with the lower-ranked jobs filled by both men and women, while the higher-ranked jobs—upper-level programmers and systems analysts—are held almost exclusively by men. Occasionally one hears of a clerk who trains to be a systems analyst or a secretary who rises to become an officer in the company. This kind of story generates excitement precisely because it is a freak occurrence.

The segregation of jobs by sex is so universal that the office structure is frequently viewed as a "natural" situation. Does not having men in authority and women in subordinate positions reflect their places in society as a whole? Moreover, don't the requirements for clerical and managerial jobs fit the stereotypes for feminine and masculine traits? Women are said to make good clerks because they are conscientious about details, have nimble hands for operating office machines, and are sufficiently submissive to take orders well. In contrast, managerial traits—rationality, decisiveness, objectivity, and assertiveness—are seen as exclusively masculine qualities.

The appearance of naturalness is shattered by a historical survey, which reveals that the sex composition of jobs shifts over time. Jobs that were once predominantly male sometimes come to be occupied primarily by females, and vice versa. When the work force of an occupation changes from largely male or mixed-sex to predominantly female, the process is called *feminization*. Accompanying the shift in sex may be a change in the actual activities of the job or in the traits that are seen as necessary for the job.

Changes in both sex composition and job activities have taken place in the office. The present division of labor in the large office is a fairly recent phenomenon. Until 1910, office work was done almost exclusively by men. Clerks were few in number, constituting only 2.6 percent of the labor force in 1900.[4] Until the last years of the nineteenth century, most businesses were small, local, family-owned enterprises.[5] The offices were made up of a handful of clerks, at most. The head clerk had extensive resonsibilities, many of which would be labeled managerial today.[6] His advice might be sought by his employer, because of his familiarity with the details of the business. He might be expected to carry on the business when the owner was absent or away. Braverman notes:

> This picture of the clerk as assistant manager, retainer, confidant, management trainee, and prospective son-in-law can of course be overdrawn. There were clerks—hard-driven copyists in law offices, for example—whose condition and prospects in life were little better than those of dock workers. But by and large, in terms of function, authority, pay, tenure of employment (a clerical position was usually a lifetime post), prospects, not to mention status and even dress, the clerks stood much closer to the employer than to factory labor.[7]

The ground for women's entrance into the offices was prepared during the Civil War, when women were hired to work in the government because of the shortage of male labor. The "experiment" was successful, for the women proved to be good workers and economical, working for only one-half to two-thirds the wages paid to men.[8]

The large-scale entry of women into offices, however, did not begin until the end of the nineteenth century. This period was one of rapid growth and consolidation of corporations.[9] The economy came to be dominated by enterprises with national markets and substantial financing by banks. The size of organizations mushroomed and with it the volume of communication, record-keeping, and related activities. Hence there was a burgeoning demand for clerical labor, met by an influx of workers into the field. As shown in table 1, the clerical work force grew from an estimated 91,000 in 1870 to more than 770,000 by 1900, doubling in the next ten-year period to 1,885,000. Except for 1929–35, during the Depression, the clerical work force has grown substantially every decade. As impressive as the overall growth was, the most striking trend was the increasing proportion of women. While the size of the occupation increased by a factor of 8 between 1870 and 1900, the proportion of women increased by a factor of 340. The number of women entering clerical work then began to exceed the number of men, so that by the late 1920s a tipping point had been reached, at which over half of all clerical workers were women.

Women, far from being seen as naturally suited to office work, were at first considered an oddity. An 1875 engraving depicts the ludicrousness of women in offices by showing them crocheting, dressing each other's hair, reading *Harper's*

TABLE 1 Growth of the clerical force, 1870–1980[a]

	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
Total clerical workers (in thousands)	91	186	490	770	1,885	3,311	4,274	4,847	7,635	9,783	13,714	18,105
As percentage of employed persons	.7%	1.1%	2.1%	2.6%	5.1%	8.0%	9.0%	9.1%	12.8%	14.7%	17.4%	18.6%
Female clerical workers (in thousands)	2	8	83	204	677	1,601	2,223	2,549	4,597	6,629	10,233	14,502
As percentage of all clerical workers	2.4%	4.3%	16.9%	26.5%	35.9%	48.4%	52.0%	52.6%	60.2%	67.8%	74.6%	80.1%

Sources: For total clerical workers and female clerical workers, 1870 to 1940: compiled from Janet M. Hooks, *Women's Occupations through Seven Decades*, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, Bulletin no. 218 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), tables 11A, 11B. For employed persons, 1870 to 1940: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics: Abstracts of the United States*, Series D57–71. For 1950 to 1970: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), table 366. For 1980: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* 28 (Jan. 1981), table 23.

[a] Figures are not strictly comparable due to minor reclassifications of occupational categories.

Bazaar, and spilling ink; a man, presumably the owner, has just walked in and is dumbstruck. A lively debate was carried on in the pages of popular and business magazines from the 1890s through the 1920s by attackers and defenders of women in offices.[10] During the 1920s and 1930s, many popular novels and short stories depicted the lives and loves of the "office girl," in which the principal conflict was romance and marriage versus career and spinsterhood.[11]

Faced with this skepticism about their desirability, why did increasing numbers of women go into clerical work rather than other occupations? Clearly the large number of jobs created by changes in corporate structure provided one necessary condition. Another important factor, according to some writers, was the impact of the typewriter, which was invented in 1873.[12] The Remington Company trained women to demonstrate the new machines, so that from the beginning the machines were operated by women. Typing in offices became identified as a feminine specialty.

Although this may have facilitated women's entry into the field, it would not have made a difference if there were not a large supply of available women to do the work.[13] Women constituted an untapped reservoir of educated and cheap labor. Women in that era were more likely to have finished high school (a requisite) than men.[14] And those men who had the requisite education could find better opportunities elsewhere. In contrast, women with high school education had few options that were more attractive. Factory and sales jobs were lower in status and in pay.[15] There is also scattered evidence that clerical workers received higher wages, particularly in the early period, than did teachers.[16]

Part of the reason men had better opportunities was that, while clerks were growing more numerous, another category was also increasing in size. Managers were needed to help coordinate the diverse activities and departments of the new organizations. A new stratum of hired managers, replacing the old-style owner-manager, was inserted between the top officers and the clerks. Henceforth this new stratum became the dominant group in the office, taking over the planning and decision making, leading one observer to call this the era of the "managerial revolution."[17]

The rise of managers and the feminization of clerical work fundamentally altered the meaning and status of clerical work. Increasingly, it meant that the carrying out of routine tasks was planned, set up, and supervised by others. A clerical job came to be viewed less and less as a stepping-stone to business success. A survey conducted in the late 1920s showed that 88 percent of the office managers "felt they needed 'clerks who are satisfied to remain clerks.' "[18] Thus, women entered the work force in occupations that no longer offered the traditional advantages of white-collar jobs: they found themselves in dead-end occupations that were declining in status, and, to make matters worse, wages did not rise as expected.

In fact, most writers argue that the wages of clerical workers actually declined in relation to manual labor, both in the early period and in the years following World War II.[19] Evidence on this point is scattered. Although available data indicate a fall in average office wages compared to average factory wages over the last ninety years, the degree and timing of the fall are difficult to pin down. Data from different historical periods are not comparable because the definitions of office work sometimes differ, and men's and women's wages are not reported separately.

Prior to 1920, we find no systematic evidence of decline. National wage data for the years 1890 to 1926 (shown in table 2) indicate marked fluctuations in the relative wage advantage of clerical workers in manufacturing and steam railways over other wage earners in those industries. Overall, however, the clerical workers earned substantially more than other wage earners during the entire thirty-six-year period.[20] Data on postal employees and government employees (not shown in the table) indirectly confirm the relatively higher clerical salaries during this period.

It is only after 1920 that systematic data separate men's and women's wages. For the period from 1920 through World War II, the most systematic data were collected by New York State, which surveyed office workers employed in factories as well as all workers employed by these establishments. Table 3 presents information for five representative years. Note that clerical women during the entire period earned much less than clerical men (usually 50 to 60 percent) and somewhat less than factory men. The only group over which they have an advantage is factory women, and this declines over time.

In the post–World War II era, there is much clearer evidence of an overall decline (not due to a greater proportion of low-wage women). As table 4 shows, clerical women's wages declined markedly in relation to men's blue-collar wages. The advantage of clerical women over blue-collar women was also reduced. As a result, by the 1970s the average combined male–female clerical wages were lower than the average combined male–female blue-collar wages. The consequences of this erosion in wages for clerical workers is discussed later in this article.

THE FUNCTIONS OF CLERICAL WORK

The role of clerical work in organizations and in the economy has been altered as well as increased over time. In the early stages of industrialization, the accounting,

TABLE 2 *Average yearly wages for clerical and wage workers in manufacturing and steam railways, 1890–1926*

	1890	1900	1910	1920	1926
Clerical workers in manufacturing and steam railways	$848	$1,011	$1,156	$2,160	$2,310
Wage earners in manufacturing	$439	$ 435	$ 558	$1,358	$1,309
Wage earners in steam railways	$560	$ 548	$ 677	$1,817	$1,613
Clerical wages as proportion of other manufacturing wages	193.2%	232.4%	207.2%	159.0%	176.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*, bicentennial ed., Part 2, Series D (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), 779–93.

TABLE 3 Average weekly wages for office workers and all workers[a] in New York manufacturing industries, 1914–47

	1914	1924	1934	1944[b]	1947
Office workers	$19.18	$33.58	$32.45	$42.99	$47.74
Women office workers	[c]	$21.29	$21.15	$34.60	$40.76
All factory workers	$11.82[d]	$26.22	$21.97	$47.71	$53.96
All women factory workers	[c]	$16.65	$14.90	$38.46	$39.62

Source: New York State Department of Labor, *Handbook of New York Labor Statistics, 1948*, Special Bulletin no. 226 (1949), tables D4 and D12.

[a] Including office workers.

[b] Wages for years after 1939 are not comparable with earlier years because of some changes in classification.

[c] Breakdown by sex not available.

[d] Average for last seven months of the year.

TABLE 4 Median yearly wage or salary income for full-year clerical workers and operatives by sex, 1939–1980

	1939	1949	1960	1970	1980
Clerical workers, women	$1,072	$2,235	$3,586	$5,539	$10,997
Clerical workers, men	$1,564	$3,136	$5,247	$8,652	$18,247
Operatives, women	$ 742	$1,920	$2,970	$4,465	$ 9,440
Operatives, men	$1,268	$2,924	$4,977	$7,644	$15,702
Women clerical workers					
Wages as percentage of men operatives' wages	84%	76%	72%	72%	70%
Women clerical workers					
Wages as percentage of women operatives' wage	144%	116%	121%	124%	116%

Sources: For 1949: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1950 Census of the Population of the United States: Special Reports, Vol. 4*, P-E no. 1B, table 20. For all other years: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–60, no. 69, table A-10 (for 1939 and 1960), no. 80, table 55 (for 1970), and no. 80, table 55 (for 1980). The figures given for all years except 1949 are for full-time, full-year workers. Those for 1949 are for all full-year workers.

record-keeping, and other office operations were incidental to the main productive activities of a company. The amount of clerical labor expended for a given unit of goods produced was relatively small. In more advanced stages of capitalism, however, the accounting and record-keeping functions became much more complex.The number of intermediate stages between production and consumption—wholesaling, transportation, advertising, marketing—increased, and at each stage clerical operations need to be performed. Finally:

> Just as in some industries the labor expended upon marketing begins to approach the amount expended upon the production of the commodities being sold, so in some industries the labor expended upon the mere transformation of the form of value (from the commodity form into the form of money or credit)—including the policing, the cashiers and collection work, the recordkeeping, the accounting, etc.—begins to approach or surpass the labor used in producing the underlying commodity or service.[21]

In short, in large-scale modern organizations, clerical operations are no longer incidental functions, but important processes in their own right.

An equally important trend in the past quarter-century has been a shift of economic growth from manufacturing to the service and financial sectors. These sectors rely on clerical labor in the same way that manufacturing industries rely on blue-collar labor—for the production of the main goods for exchange. The so-called office industries (principally banking, insurance, and finance) deal almost solely with the accounting and transfer of values. To a lesser but still considerable extent, service industries and public agencies—such as educational institutions and auto registration bureaus—rely heavily on office functions to do their work. Thus they become "semiclerical" industries. The office and semiclerical industries together now employ a larger and larger share of the work force.

The sheer numbers of workers employed in clerical work have made it important to the economy. But the services that the office and semiclerical industries provide to other sectors of the economy have made these industries vital even for basic production activity. The net result is that clerical work is increasingly central to the operation of the economy as a whole.

These developments constitute what has been called a paper-work revolution. The incredible growth of these clerical occupations in turn has significance for issues of gender equality. Women have traditionally been seen as an auxiliary work force, a secondary group of workers who carry out the least essential activities, while men carry out the central ones. The paper-work revolution changes that pattern. Functions previously seen as auxiliary are now central to the running of industrial organizations, and it is women who are carrying out these functions. For the first time since the early 1800s, women predominate in a job category that is central to the industrial economy. They can no longer be viewed simply as auxiliary workers. As a collectivity, therefore, women clerical workers have a great deal of potential power, perhaps equal to that of male production workers—but as yet unrealized.

THE CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE OFFICE

The realization of this potential power is made problematic, however, by a second and related trend. The very size and centrality of clerical operations has made managers eager to bring office work under closer managerial control.[22] As a result of their efforts to do so, the features that once distinguished clerical work are being eroded, and the line between it and manual work is becoming blurred.[23]

Most people are aware of the principle of subdivision as it applies to the organization of blue-collar production. Tasks are broken down into small segments so that each worker does one part of the overall work. An unskilled worker can be trained quickly to carry out these narrow tasks, and should the worker leave, she/he can be easily replaced by another unskilled worker. Mechanization speeds up the work by substituting machine power for human energy. The pace of the machine controls the pace of the work. With more sophisticated machinery, many operations can be carried out automatically.

These principles of subdivision and mechanization can also be applied to paper work—and have been since the rise of the large office. The initial thrust for reorganization of clerical work occurred in the office industries. Operations such as handling correspondence were studied and then standardized. Where possible, the operation was divided into subtasks assigned to different pools of workers. By the second decade of the century scientific management had been introduced into office routines.[24] Extensive time-and-motion studies were conducted on the minutest details—opening file drawers, taking off a paper clip, and so forth. Office machines, both simple and complex, were also introduced, but more slowly. Extensive mechanization and automation occurred after World War II.[25]

These changes in the office have been uneven. There are numerous small offices today that scarcely differ from their nineteenth-century counterparts. Even in large corporations, pockets of the "preindustrial office" have survived. Private secretaries have been largely exempt from the rationalizing trend, and they usually perform a variety of tasks from composing letters and answering the telephone to running personal errands. They have frequent personal contact with their superiors. Since the secretary's whole position is defined by her attachment to a particular person, some observers have labeled her the "office wife."[26] This personal tie to her boss effectively screens her from organizational scrutiny of her activities. Until recently, corporations were willing to tolerate this situation, even encouraging it for the sake of managerial morale. Having a secretary to carry out time-consuming routine chores was a perquisite of executive status.

In recent years the drive for managerial control over employees' time and output has taken on added momentum. The first step in control is to gather the scattered secretaries and place them in a pool where they can be centrally supervised. Private secretaries are increasingly reserved for the highest ranks of managers. Lesser lights must make do with the shared services of pools.

Pools of typists and clerks have existed for some time, but now their use is more extensive and they are more highly organized. We observed an example of the new pooling system in a branch office of a firm we will call Public Utility. The office was reorganized when an IBM word-processing system was installed and is now typical of clerical industries in the way routine correspondence is handled.

Middle-level managers (called *clients* in this system) share the services of two major pools of clerks. The word-processing unit, made up of ten to twelve women, does all typing. Clients submit material to be typed on dial dictation equipment; the word-processing clerks transcribe the material into typed form, using semiautomatic machines. The work flow is continuous, unvaried, and fast. The administrative service center performs all nontyping services, such as answering phones and scheduling appointments. Instructions for carrying out tasks are written in manuals. For example, precise instrucions are given for routing phone calls and delivering the mail. A third group does all copying and reproduction work.

These new pooling arrangements have been facilitated by technological advancements. For example, output machines with memory capacity can type more than a hundred "personal" letters an hour. Canned paragraphs, stored in the memory, are melded with names, addresses, and "personal greetings" from a computer list as the letter is typed on the printer. The typist types only the names, addresses, and greetings. The impetus to subdivide the work process can best be understood, however, not as a response to technological advances but as part of a drive to attain control over the cost of clerical services and to assure reliability and standardization in the work process. Since the automated systems require workers to use standard forms, they also make it easier for management to trace errors and assess each worker's productivity, whether it be number of lines typed or phone calls answered.

THE EXPERIENCES OF CLERICAL WORKERS

What impact do conditions have on the workers themselves? How do the women feel about their jobs? For the past eight years we have been studying clerical work. In 1975 and 1976, we conducted in-depth interviews with thirty female clerical workers in a variety of jobs in many different organizations. Their responses were as varied as their own situations. Additional interviews, conducted in a large insurance and utilty company between 1978 and 1980 as part of a larger study, revealed similar patterns of responses.

Pay

Women clerical workers are not poorly paid in comparison to other women workers, but their wages reflect the disadvantaged position of women in relation to men. In 1975, the median wage for women clerical workers employed full-time year-round was $7,562. This figure was only 68 percent of the median wages for male factory operatives whose jobs require less education and training; and it was only 62.3 percent of that earned by male clerical workers.[27] Another important yardstick is the standard of living made possible by wages. According to U.S. Department of Labor estimates, in 1975 a single person in the urban United States spent between $5,668 and $5,821 to live on an intermediate budget.[28] This figure excluded state and local taxes and disability payments. If these expenditures are added in, we see that median clerical salaries were sufficient to maintain a moderate standard of living for a single individual. They were clearly inadequate for a woman head of household with two dependents, who needed between $10,416 and $11,795 on an intermediate budget.[29] Thus, most clerical women with families are dependent on another person's income to maintain a moderate standard of living.

The salaries among the women we interviewed in the Boston area ranged from $5,000 to $13,600 with a mean of $8,998 and a median of $9,074. These figures are higher than the national average. However, the cost of living in Boston is also higher. The intermediate budget for a single individual took from $6,693 to $6,874, and a head of household with two dependents needed from $12,301 to

$13,929.[30] Thus, the women we interviewed were representative, vis-à-vis the cost of living, of women nationally. It is also important to note that five of the thirty women (16.7 percent) earned *below* the intermediate standard for single individuals. Half of all the women felt their wages should be higher, primarily because they felt their work was worth more. The responses of the women who judged their salaries appropriate were interesting. Nine said that the work they did or their own qualifications were not worth more, and five said that other women doing comparable work received similar wages. Perhaps these workers had internalized the low value accorded their work by society and the company, accepted other women's low wages as the appropriate comparison, or realized that they had little hope of earning more. Whatever the reason, their acceptance dissipated the feeling that they deserved a living wage.

An investigation five years later showed no change in the relative pay and living standards of women clerical workers despite a rise in absolute wages. By 1980 median earnings for women clerical workers employed full-time, year-round was $10,997; this was still only 70.0 percent of the median wages of male factory operatives and 60.3 percent of the earnings of male clerical workers.[31] Moreover, women clerical workers were no better off in relation to the standard of living. By 1980 a single person was estimated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to need between $8,560 and $8,791 for a moderate standard of living. A female head of household was estimated to need between $15,731 and $17,813 to live on an intermediate budget.[32] A female clerical worker still could not support a family at a moderate standard on her own wages.

Deskilled Jobs

Clerical jobs have been deskilled in two ways. First, the *variety* of skills required in all-around jobs is not needed in the growing number of limited-function jobs. An administrative services clerk, who had formerly worked in smaller offices, complained that she was unable to keep up her typing skills. All typing was done in the word-processing unit. She did not want to type full-time, so she did not get to type at all. Second, the *level* of skills required has been degraded. Complete accuracy is not essential in typing because the new equipment corrects errors semiautomatically. Even literacy, long a hallmark of clerical occupations, is being programmed out of some traditional specialties. The file clerk in automated systems does not need to know the sequence of the alphabet or numbers. She simply places the documents to be filed on the plate of the machine as quickly as possible.

Overqualified Workers

A related outcome is that many women feel they have abilities and skills that go unused. Many women are simply *overeducated.* Our sample of thirty women included sixteen with at least some college. This proportion was much higher than in the general clerical population; nevertheless, nationally, 28.4 percent of all clerical workers had at least some college, and 6.7 percent had four or more years. By 1980, 31 percent of women clerical workers had some college, and 8.6 percent had four or more years [33] (see table 5). One of the college-educated women in our sample noted: "The things on the job description, any sixth grader could do."

TABLE 5 *Educational attainment of women clerical workers, March 1980*

	Total employed (thousands)	Years of school completed			
		Fewer than 12 years	12 years	1–3 years of college	4 or more years of college
Number	10,351[a]	807	6,335	2,329	890
Percentage	100%	7.8%	61.2%	22.5%	8.6%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "More College Graduates in the Labor Force," *News* (Jan. 21, 1981).

[a] Numbers do not add exactly to total because they were calculated from percentages.

College-educated women are not alone in feeling their jobs are too limited. Many of the noncollege women are *overskilled.* They have received training in stenography or other specialties in high school or vocational institutions. These skills are either obsolete or in limited demand because of the new systems. The women expressed their convictions of being underused by such statements as "I could do more;" "I can handle more responsibility;" "There's no way I would not welcome more challenging work;" or "I feel misplaced."

Career Ladders

Because of the sex-segregated office hierarchies described earlier, clerical jobs do not link up to professional or managerial ladders. Many workers find themselves at the tops of their ladders in a few years, with nowhere to go. Although there are few advantages to staying in the job, there are also few benefits from changing. The worker typically finds she can move only horizontally or downward. One woman expressed frustration that she was at a dead end in her current job, then concluded: "It took me ten years of seniority to get a month's vacation. If I left and went to another job, I don't know how long it would take."

Job Security

Just as a blue-collar assembly-line worker can be easily replaced, the clerical worker in a highly rationalized clerical job finds she has a precarious hold on her position. Caplow points out the basic similarities of semiskilled factory work and clerical jobs in large offices in this regard:

> The modern technics [*sic*] of job classification and personnel selection, developed in connection with large-scale production, are designed above all to facilitate the interchangeability of personnel. One method of ensuring interchangeability is to reduce each complex operation to a series of simple operations which require no extraordinary ability. . . . At the same time, the formal qualifications required for employment are standardized by the educational process, so that there are comparatively few differences that matter between one worker and another.[34]

Many clerical workers are acutely aware that they are expendable. A worker notes: "We laugh around here and say, 'Clericals? They're the throw-aways.' I feel like clerical workers are like machines. When the machines break down, you just replace them." An insurance company clerk says, "I'm a number. That's all anybody is at X. If you die, they replace you the next day. You can always be replaced." A clerk in administrative services describes the manuals the clerks are required to write, listing their duties and specifying exactly how each of their clients likes to have his mail delivered. She says, "If I'm out, my fill-in should be able to do what I do. . . . It's like writing yourself out of a job."

Control over the Worker

The private secretary and the limited-function clerk provide illustrations of the two main forms of control over the office worker. The secretary experiences personal control by her immediate boss. By definition, she is doing a good job if he is pleased by her performance. By the same token, the boss screens the secretary from direct company control. Several secretaries mentioned that their bosses safeguarded their time or protected them from unpleasant company assignments. The basis of control, therefore, is highly personal, with all of the problems of arbitrariness that this entails.

In contrast, clerks in pooled arrangements are subject primarily to impersonal controls; that is, formal rules are applied (e.g., clocking in) and external checks of performance are built into the work routine. The supervisor makes no special effort to keep track of workers' performance—the worker is, for example, simply visible at her designated post. A supervisor at a large insurance company claims she can tell at a glance whether one of her charges is doing her assigned task. The total output of a clerk is automatically counted by her machine.

While the secretary can get angry at her boss for exercising control, a word-processing clerk cannot easily target her resentment. She may be angry at her supervisor, while realizing that the supervisor has no real power, or feel generally angry at "them" (the anonymous big bosses). Frequently, the anger is experienced as a pervasive sense of tension or a feeling of being in a fishbowl.

The Meaning of Work

The many negative job conditions do not mean women find no meaning or satisfaction in their jobs. We found that, on the whole, the women were committed to working, if not to their specific jobs. In addition to the income, which they clearly saw as most important, the women found meaning in three areas. First, work provided opportunities to form and maintain social connections. Second, it gave direction and purpose to their lives by structuring their time and getting them involved in "useful" activity. Third, for some women, particularly married women with children, it provided an identity separate from their family roles.[35]

Coping

Since the women sought meaning in their work, and their particular jobs sometimes frustrated this desire, they responded in a number of ways. A few, whose jobs allowed the latitude, informally expanded their jobs, gradually taking over new responsibilities (but they were not given titles or salaries commensurate with their actual activities). Some, particularly the college graduates, intended to leave the clerical field altogether. The majority, however, felt they had limited options and tried to find what satisfactions they could on the job—by being particularly "nice" to each other, by viewing the materials they typed as critical to the company, or by simply doing their often limited jobs well. At the same time, they protected themselves from attempts to exploit their eagerness to do something meaningful. They shrugged off compliments and rejected ploys designed to get them to do extra work.

ORGANIZING

None of the women in our original study spontaneously suggested organizing or unionization as a possible strategy for dealing with her problems. Yet in the later study, when asked about the idea of an organization for clerical workers, over 50 percent of the women working in a nonunion company said it was a good idea. Despite these sentiments, clerical workers remain the largest category of nonunionized wage workers.

Experienced labor organizers generally consider clerical workers the most difficult segment of labor to organize and have made relatively little effort to unionize it. A variety of arguments have been put forward to explain the difficulties of organizing clerical personnel. Most explanations focus on two characteristics: their gender and their lack of worker consciousness.

One line of argument is that women see themselves as secondary workers. Their primary commitment is to their present or future family roles. Therefore, their wages and working conditions are not of sufficient importance to motivate them to join unions.[36] A second line of argument focuses on women's socialization. Women are trained to take a subordinate position to men. Their situation in the office does not strike them as unfair; thus they are unlikely to organize in opposition to authority.[37] A related argument is that, also as a result of socialization, women accept exploitation because they have been trained to think it unladylike to fight back. According to one writer:

> A great majority of office workers are female and have been socialized into anti-militant values, militancy having been equated by their parents with unfeminine attitudes. Furthermore, the single office girl might prefer the prestige of a white collar job to the demotion in status involved in joining a union and thereby becoming less attractive (perhaps even declasse) to the young executive she had her eye on.[38]

This quote also illustrates another common view: that clerks fail to identify as workers because they identify with management. In the case of men, it is because they aspire to managerial positions.[39] In the case of women, it is because they hope to marry into management.[40] Lockwood cites a union official who says the personal relations between managers and clerical workers make it unlikely that they will unite to oppose management.[41] In addition, common dress, common working conditions, and overlapping job activities encourage clerks to see themselves as part of management.

Another belief illustrated by the above quote and elaborated by Lockwood is that clerical workers are particularly status-conscious.[42] Their marginal social positions make them snobbish and anxious about their status. To protect themselves they set up artificial barriers between themselves and the working class.

More and more women see themselves as serious, long-term workers. Out of the thirty women we interviewed, twenty-seven planned to be working five years in the future, some outside the field of clerical work, but most within it. This is a realistic expectation, given the emerging pattern for women of more continuous participation in the labor force. More than half of all women between the ages of eighteen and sixty-four are employed.[43] Several trends indicate that women are likely to spend more years in the labor force. First, single women have traditionally high rates of employment, and more young women are remaining single today. Second, labor force participation among married women with children has increased phenomenally over the past fifteen years. Third, women are having fewer children, which means that they will be taking fewer years out for childbearing and child rearing.[44] In fact, a special study of work-life expectancies indicated that the work life of women born in 1970 can be expected to average 22.9 years.[45] Certainly the women we interviewed took their earning power seriously. Being able to make a living—being economically independent—was an important source of pride and self-esteem.

Whether women consider union activity "unfeminine" is harder to determine directly. What is clear is that about half of the women we interviewed, when asked directly, supported the idea of a union. Those who opposed the idea expressed concern that unions represented another outside force, another "they," which would impose conditions the women might not want. Such an expression can hardly be taken to mean that women accept subordination easily. Moreover, we note that nationally 61 percent of clerical workers in 1979 were married.[46] It is unlikely that they reject union activity for the sake of snaring a manager into marriage.

We found little evidence that clerks identify with management in opposition to their own self-interest. To be sure, private secretaries took personal pride in their bosses' successes. However, clerks in other categories were keenly aware of the dichotomy between boss and worker. Many of them resented what they perceived as attempts by management to manipulate them through false compliments. Others complained about having no say over where they worked or what they did. They could be transferred from one section to another or have their jobs changed arbitrarily. Powerlessness of the individual worker was one of the main reasons given for supporting a union. As one worker said, "If we had unions, we could stick together and help each other instead of one person defending herself." Another woman displayed a wily cynicism about managerial pronouncements. She said that when the company instituted pools, workers were told that the new systems would be more democratic. She shrewdly pointed out that while a secretary received $150 a week, a pool clerk got only $120.

We would argue, therefore, that female character and lack of worker consciousness are not impenetrable barriers to organizing. The fact remains that clerical workers have not been organized. Why? An important part of the answer is that not much effort has been put into organizing them. Many are employed in sectors of the economy that are newer and not unionized—for example, service industries.[47] Unions have generally concentrated on improving wages and benefits and increasing membership in industries in which they are already established, rather than organizing new industries.

Another part of the answer lies in the nature of the labor market in which women work. Most explanations of the absence of unions overlook this factor. Women confront a sex-segregated labor market. They are crowded into a few sex-typed occupations. The occupations dominated by women are those in which it is difficult to control entry (i.e., monopolize jobs) and in which there is a surplus of qualified workers who are not in the labor force at a given time.[48] Any worker can be easily replaced from this available labor pool. Under these conditions it is difficult for women to develop collective strength.

Still another part of the answer lies in the composition of the clerical work force. Clerical workers are extremely diverse; they come from widely varied educational and social backgrounds. Our own sample of thirty women reflects the range: the occupations of their fathers covered the thirteen major groupings used by the U.S. Census. Their own educations varied from less than high school to postgraduate college degrees. Because of the limited job options open to women, due to sex-typing of jobs, women with diverse qualifications end up in a common occupation. The current situations of these women were equally varied. Among the married women, some were married to professionals, others to semiskilled or unskilled workers. This fits the national picture. Of all married female clerical workers with employed husbands in 1981, 50 percent had white-collar husbands and 43 percent blue-collar husbands.[49] Since these women lack a shared class situation, it should not be surprising that they lack a sense of common identity.

Despite the barriers to organizing, there has been a great increase in organizing activity among women clerical workers. Ironically, the very changes in technology and organization that managers are introducing into offices may help to create conditions that encourage organization among workers. As common disadvantages become more widespread, they may overshadow the absence of common class background. Some evidence suggests that employed women come to judge their social class from their own occupations, rather than from their husbands' or their fathers'.[50]

In addition, there has been a general trend toward unionization among white-collar workers, and growing efforts have been made to organize clerical workers. Organized labor has stepped up its campaign to organize state and municipal employees and has also begun making inroads in the private sector. In January 1978, more than twelve hundred members of Local 29 of the Office and Professional Employees Union in Oakland, California, ended a three-month strike against a major insurance company after obtaining a satisfactory settlement on work conditions.[51] Grassroots groups have sprung up among women office and service workers in the larger cities. Ten of these groups are now affiliated in a national organization known as 9 to 5 (previously called Working Women), which has chapters in Boston, Providence, Baltimore, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Seattle, and Los Angeles. Several other groups—

Women Organized for Employment, in San Francisco; Women Employed, in Chicago; and Women Office Workers, in New York—remain independent but have reciprocal information exchanges with 9 to 5. All of these groups use political and educational strategies to improve the position of women office workers. They work for changes in employer policies (such as job posting), for workplace improvements (such as back-pay settlements and training programs), to inform the public about the conditions office workers face, and to build organizations for office workers.

More recently, a second level of organization has developed in the form of new unions, separate locals of established unions, or separate unions affiliated with internationals. Boston's Local 925 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) began as a spin-off of the Boston chapter of 9 to 5. While the Boston 9 to 5 group continues its educational and politicizing activities, Local 925 evolved, in March 1981, into District 925 (SEIU), an organization with a national jurisdiction and the rights of a local. District 925 is now embarked on a national organizing drive and expects to have four thousand members by the end of 1982.[52] Another partnership links District 65 (Distributive Workers of America) with the United Automobile Workers, while other unions—the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; the Office and Professional Employees International Union; and the Teamsters—organize particular areas of the clerical work force.

There are two possible—and not mutually exclusive—outcomes of clerical organizing. One is that clerical workers will receive increased material benefits in the form of higher wages, shorter hours, better medical insurance, and other traditional union goals. Another is that the quality of work life will be improved through changes in the organization of work activities.

The history of organized labor indicates that the first set of goals is likely to be achieved but not the second. However, the degree to which issues of quality of work life are addressed will depend partly on which forms of organizing predominate and what kinds of unions are formed. At one time it seemed that the women's movement might provide a model for a different kind of organizing among clerical workers. Although the uncertain future of the women's movement makes that prospect seem less likely, the grassroots organizing of what might be called the preunion groups continues to borrow heavily from the techniques of the women's movement. These include the use of group support to help women identify common problems, consciousness-raising activities (such as public speak-outs), and interpersonal strategies for changing worker–boss relationships. The shift toward forming unions necessarily involves other methods of organizing, yet it may not signal the end of a unique kind of organizing among clerical workers. Clerical workers are beginning to gain recognition as workers in the popular culture, as in the film and television show "Nine to Five." Moreover, they are including in their organizing issues that directly challenge sexist practices and define a unique aspect of women's work experience—such as pay equity (comparable worth) and protection against sexual harassment. Such organizing seems to proceed from a vision of active, autonomous locals and a full voice for workers. If the organizing succeeds on these grounds, it is more likely to lead to demands for fundamental changes in the workplace than if more traditional approaches are used.

It is an exciting future to contemplate. When clerical women organize widely, they will become one of the largest groups within the union movement. They may well alter the issues and concerns addressed by organized labor.

NOTES

1. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Trends of Earnings among White Collar Workers during the War*, Bulletin no. 783 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944). Also Grace Coyle, "Women in the Clerical Occupations," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 143 (1929), 180–87.
2. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings* 29 (Mar. 1982), table 23.
3. See Rosabeth Kanter, "Women and the Structure of Organizations," in Marcia Millman and Rosabeth Kanter, eds., *Another Voice* (New York: Anchor, 1975). Also Rosabeth Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic, 1977).
4. The best descriptions of the historical changes in office work are: Margery Davies, "Women's Place Is at the Typewriter: The Feminization of the Clerical Labor Force," *Radical America* 8 (1974), 1–28; Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), chap. 15; C. Wright Mills, *White Collar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).
5. Daniel Bell, "The Breakup of Family Capitalism," in Bell, *The End of Ideology*, rev. ed. (New York: Collier, 1961).
6. Mary Kathleen Benet, *The Secretarial Ghetto* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972).
7. Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 294.
8. Davies, "Women's Place Is at the Typewriter."
9. Bell, "The Breakup of Family Capitalism."
10. Davies, "Women's Place Is at the Typewriter."
11. Judith Smith, "The New Woman Knows How to Type: Some Connections between Sexual Ideology and Clerical Work, 1900–1930" (Paper presented at the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Mass., 1974).
12. Writers who have made this point include: Coyle, "Women in the Clerical Occupations"; Davies, "Women's Place Is at the Typewriter"; Janet Hooks, *Women's Occupations through Seven Decades*, Women's Bureau Bulletin, no. 218 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944); Bruce Bliven, Jr., *The Wonderful Writing Machine* (New York: Random House, 1954); and Elizabeth F. Baker, *Technology and Woman's Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).
13. The introduction of new technologies is often related to changes in the sex composition of an occupation. Jo Freeman (personal communication) points out that sometimes a new labor force is introduced because the older group of workers will not or cannot use the new technology. We would argue against strictly technological determination, however. The replacement of frame-spinning machinery with mule-spinning machinery in the 1840s coincided with a changeover from a predominately female to a predominately male labor force in textiles. Mule-spinning equipment was considered unsuitable for women, partly because it was awkward to use with long skirts. Mule spinning had been widely used for many years in England prior to its use in the United States. Due to the shortage of male labor, its introduction into American factories was delayed for many years. Thus, we would argue that a changeover in labor force accompanying technological change occurs only when there is an available

alternate labor pool. See Edith Abbot, *Women in Industry* (New York: Appleton, 1910), especially 91–92.

14. Valerie K. Oppenheimer, *The Female Labor Force in the United States: Demographic and Economic Factors Governing Its Growth and Changing Composition*, Population Monograph Series, no. 5 (Berkeley: University of California, 1970).
15. Robert Smuts, *Women and Work in America*, rev. ed. (New York: Schocken, 1971).
16. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*, bicentennial ed., part 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), 168. Also Elyce Rotella, "Occupational Segregation and the Supply of Women to the American Clerical Labor Force, 1870–1930" (Paper presented at the Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Mass., 1974).
17. James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution* (New York: John Day, 1941).
18. Coyle, "Women in the Clerical Occupations."
19. For example, Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital;* Mills, *White Collar;* and Coyle, "Women in the Clerical Occupations."
20. Braverman *(Labor and Monopoly Capital)* uses the 1900 data on manufacturing and steam railway workers and contrasts it with 1971 data on clerical and manual wages to illustrate the erosion of clerical wages. The contrast implies a dramatic decline over the seventy years. As table 2 shows, the 1900 figures are the point of maximum difference, 56 percent greater than 1890, thus accentuating the apparent decline of clerical wages.
21. Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 302.
22. Alfred Vogel, "Your Clerical Workers Are Ripe for Unionism." *Harvard Business Review* 49 (1971), 48–54.
23. Evelyn N. Glenn and Roslyn L. Feldberg, "Degraded and Deskilled: The Proletarianization of Clerical Work," *Social Problems* 25 (1977), 52–64.
24. Influential proponents of scientific management in offices were William Henry Leffingwell, *Scientific Office Management* (Chicago: Shaw, 1917), and Lee Galloway, *Office Management: Its Principles and Practices* (New York: Ronald Press, 1918).
25. Jon M. Shepard, *Automation and Alienation: A Study of Office and Factory Workers* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1972).
26. Benet, *The Secretarial Ghetto*, and Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation*.
27. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *U.S. Working Women: A Databook*, Bulletin no. 1977 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), table 39.
28. See U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Autumn 1975 Urban Family Budgets and Comparative Indexes for Selected Urban Areas* (Boston) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, May 1976). Budget figures are presented for lower, intermediate, and higher budgets for families of four. Figures for single individuals and single heads of families are computed from these basic figures using equivalence scales from table A–1, "Revised Scale of Equivalent Income for Urban Families of Different Size, Age, and Composition," which is available from regional Bureau of Labor Statistics offices.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Money Income of Households, Families and Persons in the United States: 1980," *Current Population Reports*, Series P–60, no. 132 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), table 55.
32. These estimates for the single-person and female-headed household are rough. They were arrived at by taking the figures from the Department of Labor's total budget and multiplying them by the equivalence scales for converting consumption budgets. Figures come from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Autumn 1980*

Urban Family Budgets and Comparative Indexes for Selected Urban Areas (Boston) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, Apr. 22, 1981).

33. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *More College Graduates in Labor Force,* USDL no. 81–17 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, Jan. 21, 1981).
34. Theodore Caplow, *The Sociology of Work* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), 85.
35. Roslyn L. Feldberg and Evelyn N. Glenn, "Category or Collectivity: The Consciousness of Clerical Workers" (Paper presented at the meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, Chicago, 1977).
36. Albert Blum, *Management and the White Collar Union* (New York: American Management Association, 1964).
37. Ibid.
38. Elliot Krause, *The Sociology of Occupations* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), 86.
39. Mills, *White Collar.*
40. Krause, *The Sociology of Occupations.*
41. David Lockwood, *The Black-Coated Worker* (London: Unwin University Books, Allen & Unwin, 1958).
42. Ibid.
43. This continues to be true through June 1980. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Perspectives on Working Women: A Databook,* Bulletin no. 2080 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980), table 4.
44. Allyson Sherman Grossman, "Women in the Labor Force: The Early Years," *Monthly Labor Review* 98 (1975), 3–9.
45. Howard N. Fullerton and James J. Byrne, "Length of Working Life for Men and Women, 1970," *Monthly Labor Review* 99 (1976), 31–35.
46. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Perspectives on Working Women,* calculated from table 23.
47. Martin Oppenheimer, "Women Office Workers: Petty-Bourgeoisie or New Proletarians?" *Social Scientist,* Monthly Journal of the Indian School of Social Sciences, Trivandrum, Kerala, nos. 40–41.
48. See Caplow, *The Sociology of Work,* chap. 10, for a discussion of these and related points. An economist, Mary Stevenson, in "Wage Differences between Men and Women: Economic Theories," in Ann H. Stromberg and Shirley Harkess, eds., *Women Working* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield, 1978), analyzes the impacts of occupational segregation and consequent crowding of women's occupations on women's wages.
49. U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Household and Family Characteristics, March, 1981," *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, no. 371 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), calculated from table 6.
50. Kathleen Ritter and Lowell Hargens, "Occupational Positions and Class Identifications of Married Women: A Test of the Asymmetry Hypothesis," *American Journal of Sociology* 80 (Jan. 1975), 934–48.
51. Reported in *Seven Days,* Jan. 1978, 4.
52. Karen Nussbaum, executive director, District 925 (SEIU), personal communication.

BARBARA M. WERTHEIMER

"Union is power": Sketches from women's labor history

EARLY ATTEMPTS TO UNIONIZE

Women have always worked, in the paid as well as the unpaid work force. Whenever they worked for pay, their labor has been valued at less than a man's. In the 1847 mill town of Lowell, Massachusetts, an activist group of women textile workers played a major role as writers and editors of the labor paper *Voice of Industry*. One edition carried an article that summed up the problem then. Its theme continues to be relevant now.

> It is well known that labor performed by females commands but little when compared to that what is paid to men—though the work may be of the same character. Why is this? What possible difference can it make to the employer whether he pays A or B one dollar for accomplishing a piece of work, so that it be done equally as well by one as the other? A female generally receives but about one-half as much as is paid to a man for doing the same amount of labor. It has been urged that they are the weaker sex, and are dependent upon us for resistance, and per consequence this difference in the price of labor should be made. But this very dependence is the result of inequality, and would not exist were the proper remedy applied. There are, it is well known, hundreds of families in our cities supported solely by females, who are obliged to labor with the needle twelve to fourteen hours out of the twenty-four, to gain hardly a comfortable subsistence for themselves and those dependent upon them, so trifling is the compensation they receive.[1]

Women and children made up the first factory population of the United States in the early nineteenth century. In 1814 the first power loom went into operation, and a year later the first mill opened in Waltham, Massachusetts. The agricultural sector was suffering from an acute labor shortage, and every able-bodied man was needed to work the land. The new industrialists gave assurances that, indeed, they did not mean to lure men off the land but rather to take advantage of "six hundred thousand girls in the country between the ages of ten and sixteen," not fit for agriculture because they were too young or too weak but good candidates for work in the mill.[2]

By 1830, some fifty-five thousand workers, most of them women, worked in the growing number of mills dotting the New England landscape along the

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rushing streams that provided the necessary water power. By midcentury, close to one hundred thousand were employed by the textile industry. Home production of textiles was a thing of the past: the time of the wage-earning woman was at hand.

As early as 1824, women began to organize to fight wage cuts, the speeding up of their increasingly large and noisy machines, and the relentless stretch-out where each worker had to tend more machines for less money. "Our present object is to have union," proclaimed striking Lowell mill workers in 1834.[3] Walking out to protest another wage cut, the women vowed to "have their own way if they died for it." As in so many other *turnouts* (as strikes were called then), the women lost.

Organizing was difficult for men in the nineteenth century (and labor organizations invariably went under with each of the country's frequent economic downturns), but it was doubly hard for women. Striking against an employer violated every code society had established for women's behavior. It was daring to act in concert, to parade in the street, to protest, and to make demands. Newspapers berated the women; ministers pressured them to return to work.

In addition, in the first half of the nineteenth century, unions were primarily for craft and skilled workers and neither organized nor accepted women members. The women who struck had no national organizations to turn to for help and no prior union experience. In forming trade unions they were pioneers in uncharted territory. Moreover, their pay was so meager that they could neither withstand long strikes nor pay dues to support an organization that could make strike benefits available in time of need.

Since society frowned on women participating in labor organizations or even making public speeches, women rarely could count on the public for support. Furthermore, companies did not recognize women's unions. Strike leaders were not only fired but also blacklisted and found themselves unable to find work in any mill throughout New England. The courts, too, sided with the employers. The wonder is that women organized at all.

About the year 1836, a woman named Sarah Bagley traveled from the hills of New Hampshire to the Lowell mills to become one of the most dynamic labor leaders in American history, though we know about only ten short years of her life. The job of labor organizing was a lonely one. She spent several years laying the groundwork, training a corps of young women like herself, conducting classes in her boardinghouse room. Together, in 1845, these women formed the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association. Their motto was "Try Again!"—which is just what the women had to do. Their turnouts failed, as did the strikes a decade earlier, but these women did not stop there. Failing to win improvements through their strikes, the women tried to shorten their fourteen-hour workday by joining the ten-hour-day movement. Through the *Voice of Industry,* they publicized the worsening conditions in the mills. The Lowell Female Labor Reform Association succeeded in pressuring the Massachusetts state legislature to hold this country's first public hearings on factory conditions, at which mill women became the first to testify about the health hazards, low pay, and long hours of factory work.

As suddenly as she appeared, Sarah Bagley—labor educator, journalist, orator, public activist, organizer, and the country's first woman telegrapher—vanished. After 1846 there is no record of her life or whereabouts. But her active years in the Lowell mills, defying society's sanctions on women's proper place, attest to her courage. Criticized for speaking in public (and she could hold a crowd of two thousand in a premicrophone era), she responded:

> For the last half a century, it has been deemed a violation of woman's sphere to appear before the public as a speaker; but when our rights are trampled upon and we appeal in vain to legislators, what shall we do but appeal to the people?[4]

By midcentury the character of the mill work force had changed; immigrant families had replaced the farm women to form a permanent factory population. Newly arrived in a strange land and penniless, they were forced to take jobs at any wages to support themselves. They were victims not only of low pay and long hours but also of increasingly unsafe working conditions: machines with no safety guards, buildings without fire escapes or proper ventilation, poor sanitary facilities. Conditions were no better for the growing numbers of women who worked in city tenements sewing shirts and umbrellas, making flowers, or rolling cigars for a pittance. Neither group was able to organize successfully, though both tried repeatedly to raise their wages to subsistence levels.

As early as 1831, Lavinia Waight, a New York tailoress and secretary of her union, openly talked of female oppression. Tailors and tailoresses in Boston tried to organize in 1844. That same year in New York, Elizabeth Gray spoke to a meeting of seven hundred women and publicly named employers who were paying their workers ten to eighteen cents a day. The Female Industry Association grew out of that New York meeting, taking as members book folders, stitchers, straw hat workers, lace makers, and sewing workers of all kinds. But again the women found themselves powerless against the employers, and their meetings drew men who circulated among the women with offers of an easier life through prostitution.[5]

ADVANCES IN WARTIME

Ironically, wartime has always meant the expansion of job opportunities for women. The Civil War saw nursing established as a profession, through the remarkable women who served on both sides.[6] On the home front, new factories in the North opened almost overnight, employing thousands of women workers to produce the uniforms and munitions the army needed. The government, giving job preference to war widows and children of soldiers who had been killed in action, hired women as clerks and copyists for the first time. In 1866, recognizing that this was not a temporary phenomenon, Congress set wages for them at $900 a year. However, men doing the same work earned $1,800. The reforms of 1870 set equal wages for men and women in each job category, but this made little difference, because men and women rarely performed the same work.

It was not long after the war that the first national union of women workers was formed, short-lived but successful for a time. The Daughters of St. Crispin, organized in 1869, united women shoebinders from Lynn, Massachusetts, to San

Francisco, California, and included more than forty lodges at its height. At its second convention the organization adopted this resolution on equal pay:

> Whereas the common idea among employers has been and still is that woman's labor should receive a less remuneration, even though equally valuable and efficient, than is paid men even on the same qualities of work; and
>
> Whereas in every field of human effort the value and power of organization is fully recognized: Therefore be it
>
> Resolved by this national Grand Lodge . . . that we demand for our labor the same rate of compensation for equal skill displayed, or the same hours of toil, as is paid other laborers in the same branches of business; and we regard a denial of this right by anyone as a usurpation and a fraud.

Only a few years earlier in Troy, New York, shirt and collar manufacturing center of the country, the Troy Collar Laundry Union was organizing. For several years this union was one of the most successful of the period, even sending donations to men's unions on strike. Fiery Kate Mullaney, the leader, also was active in the National Labor Union and was an advocate of women's suffrage. She saw in the ballot a political tool that would win for women the respect of the local press, which, she noted, backed the men's organizing efforts while belittling those of the women. However, after a long strike that proved disastrous for the Collar Laundry Union, the women were forced to sign a pledge to give up their union in return for their jobs. In 1869, after a short but glorious six years, the Troy Collar Laundry Union folded.

CHANGES FOLLOWING THE WAR

In the decades following the Civil War a few unions, faced with growing numbers of women in their trade, began to support the admission of women to membership. The first to do so was the National Union of Cigar Makers, which opened its doors to women and black workers in 1867. Eight years later it added a clause to its constitution forbidding any local to refuse membership to a worker because of sex. In one of the early public tributes to women as union members, the Cigar Makers' *Journal* in 1878 declared that women were as loyal to the union as any men: "[Women] picketed the factories faithfully, from early morning till late in the evening, in stormy weather, rain and snow, and piercing cold."[8] Nonetheless, locals of the national union dragged their heels about admitting women and blacks to equal membership and some went to great lengths to discourage their entrance into the industry. Since many women produced cigars in the home rather than in the factory, and the union saw the home workers as a major threat to its pay scale, the "system of working" became an important union issue as well as a human one. The conditions of home workers were described in an 1885 study by New York City:

> These people worked till twelve p.m. or one o'clock a.m., then slept by the machine a few hours, and commenced work again. [Women sat] surrounded by filth with children waddling in it, whose hands, faces and bodies were covered with sores . . . even on the lips of the workers.[9]

Organizing these tenement shops was close to impossible. At the same time, because the home workers were considered a threat, Adolph Strasser, union president, turned to protective legislation in order to keep down the numbers of women in cigar making. He urged passage of laws restricting women under eighteen to no more than eight hours of work a day, with no overtime allowed, and prohibiting women from working six weeks before or after giving birth to a child. Good as they might seem in themselves, these laws cut with more than one edge. Employers forced to follow these strict rules regarding their female employees would simply not hire them and would employ men instead. For women dependent on the few cents they could earn at cigar making to feed their families, these laws spelled disaster. Even so, by the turn of the century more than one-third of all cigar workers were women, up from 10 percent in 1870.

The second union to admit women was the International Typographical Union, which helped young Augusta Lewis organize International Typographical Union Local No. 1 for women compositors. In 1870 Lewis was elected corresponding secretary for the entire union, the first woman ever to be elected a national officer of a union made up predominantly of men. In her post as secretary she surveyed conditions in the printing industry and organized, as well as making the usual reports of that post. She tried to use her position to appeal to the men for greater acceptance of union women in the trade. Often the women could not find work because union foremen would not hire them and union printers would not back them up. While the women's Typographical Union No. 1, never very large, lasted just nine years, by the time it disbanded the doors to union membership had been opened to women in printing on an equal basis with men.[10]

BLACK WOMEN WORKERS

Black women in America have always worked, since 1619, when the first three arrived in the colony of Virginia on a Dutch frigate along with seventeen black men. If life was difficult for white women, how much more so for black, most of whom were slaves until the Civil War. Sharing the long hours of work in the fields with the men, women carried the additional burden of cooking and child care. After the official end to the slave trade in 1808, owners saw black women slaves as breeders of more slaves and often used them as such.

After the Civil War, slaves who could do so migrated to the North or the West to escape the tenant and sharecropping systems that virtually enslaved them anew. They were not welcomed in the cities by white workers, who feared—with some justification—that employers would use them as strikebreakers. In all but a very few unions they were refused membership. Black men had such a difficult time finding employment in the cities that it was the black woman, working at housework and taking in laundry, who usually kept the family from starvation. Black laundresses are credited with forming Mississippi's first labor organization, the Washerwomen of Jackson. In June 1866, they organized to set prices for their work that were uniform throughout the city; they fined members who violated the code by charging less.

That same year the National Labor Union, a loose association of local unions and lodges, voted to admit black workers (and women). However, since few member locals actually admitted blacks, not many black workers joined. Toward the end of 1869 the National Colored Labor Union was founded, from the start admitting both unskilled workers and women to membership. One woman, Mary A. S. Carey, was elected to the NCLU's first executive committee, and women attended the union's first convention. Included in convention reports was that of the committee on women's labor, which urged that the new organization profit from "the mistakes heretofore made by our white fellow citizens in omitting women" and "that women be cordially included in the invitation to further and organize cooperative societies."[11] The report was adopted unanimously, including its endorsement of equal rights for women workers. Unfortunately, the NCLU had a brief life.

KNIGHTS OF LABOR

In 1881 the first national labor federation of any substance, the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor, opened its doors to women and to black workers and called for equal pay for equal work. It was a federation made up of lodges across the country, and their favorite anthem, sung at every assembly, voiced their philosophy:

> Storm the fort, ye Knights of Labor,
> Battle for your cause;
> Equal rights for every neighbor—
> Down with tyrant laws!

Among the women who joined the Knights was Leonora Barry, a widow trying to support two children through her work in a hosiery mill in Amsterdam, New York. She rose rapidly to leadership, soon heading an assembly of almost a thousand women. At the 1886 convention of the Knights in Richmond, Virginia, she met and worked closely with the fifteen other women delegates to put forward a motion, unanimously passed by what must have been a startled group of male delegates, calling for the appointment of a full-time paid woman organizer (general investigator) and a secretary to assist her. Barry was chosen for the job, a new one for a woman in labor history. Her energy, enthusiasm, and zeal show in the report of her activities for the next year. In a time when communications were slow, and travel painful, she answered 537 requests for help from women wanting to organize; filled 213 appointments; visited almost 100 towns and cities; filled 100 speaking engagements; answered 789 letters seeking advice or information; distributed some 2,000 leaflets; and answered 97 telegrams.[12]

Barry charted a new course. With no road maps to guide her, she became organizer, business agent, and labor educator all in one. When women wrote to the Knights' headquarters to request that a man be assigned as their president because they found they could not conduct meetings, she ran classes in parliamentary procedure. She worked for passage of state factory inspection laws and helped set up two cooperative shirt factories, in line with the Knights of Labor philosophy that cooperatives were an alternative to the wage system. She launched an insurance department to help women in need and initiated boycotts of nonunion products. A dynamic speaker, she was much in demand on the women's suffrage platform and in support of temperance. The causes for which she worked included industrial education to enable women to find jobs in other than traditionally low-paid women's work; abolition of the tenement system of labor; and prohibition of child labor. She was one of the first to point out that northern mills were relocating in the South in order to escape new northern laws limiting employment of children and that wider passage of legislation protecting children from exploitation was needed.

A traditionalist in some ways (she believed it unladylike to lobby by buttonholing state assemblymen and left paid employment herself when she remarried), Barry was nevertheless far ahead of her time. Many of her conclusions about the role of women in unions anticipated problems that women union leaders discuss today: poor meeting attendance, low self-confidence of women members, the need for encouragement to stimulate greater involvement of women in their assemblies, and women's reluctance to try better jobs even when trained for them. She was discouraged when she found women earning good wages who failed to extend a helping hand to other women. She came to believe that women should be organized in one "industrial hive" rather than in separate women's assemblies. She saw, too, that the indifference of the men in the Knights played an important part in discouraging women's participation.

Like Sarah Bagley and other women union leaders before her, Barry suffered the wrath of society for her nontraditional role in a period when it was still deemed improper for women to travel unaccompanied on the railroads or to speak out on behalf of workers. When priests of the Catholic church dubbed her a "lady Tramp," it hurt her as much as it angered her, and she lashed back, proclaiming her right "as an Irishwoman, a Catholic, and an honest woman" to come to the support of working women.[13]

One of the most significant women of her day, she remained active in those causes in which she believed even after she remarried, left her job, and moved to Saint Louis. For example, she took an active part in the campaign for state suffrage in Colorado (1893) and continued as a popular speaker until 1928, when cancer forced her to retire.

Yet history books rarely record her contributions, just as labor history texts ignore the strikes of women members of the Knights of Labor, such as that of the Yonkers (New York) carpet weavers in 1885. Here twenty-five hundred women walked off the job and formed a mass picket line around the mill. This time police violence against the strikers backfired, and the women found public support for their struggle. The New York labor movement joined forces to honor the bravery of the women, who held out for six months. Although they did not win the union recognition they sought, they did get important grievances resolved and a wage cut rescinded.

At its peak, fifty thousand women belonged to the Knights, out of a total claimed membership of seven hundred thousand. This marked a new phase in women workers' organizing. For the first time, a labor federation had recognized the importance of its women members and established a women's department, elevating its director to a post as a general officer in 1887. Even though individual men in the Knights often failed to cooperate with the women's department—or did so reluctantly—the Knights openly supported equal pay for equal work, in some cases with considerable success. After 1890 the Knights of Labor declined. It would be many years before women found the same welcome and support in a labor federation again.

THE WOMEN'S TRADE UNION LEAGUE

As the Knights declined, a new labor organization rose to take its place: the American Federation of Labor (AFL). In 1890, when the federation was in ascendance, close to four million women were employed outside the home in a total work force of twenty-two million. One in four of these working women was nonwhite, and most of the nonwhite women still lived and worked in the South.

New jobs were opening for white women as several occupations became established as "women's work": retail sales, telephone switchboard operation, clerical and secretarial work, and garment sewing. By 1895, although many unions still refused to admit women, 5 percent of all union members were female. Officially, the policy of the AFL was to organize women and to urge equal pay. In practice, the federation did not have the power to enforce this policy on member unions and exerted little pressure on them to conform. In some cases the AFL chartered federal locals of women workers, allowing direct affiliation with the federation, but these small, independent locals had a low survival rate.

Nonetheless, by the turn of the century, women made up more than half of all union members in five industries: women's clothing, gloves, hat and cap, shirtwaist and laundry, and tobacco. Women's wages averaged little more than half of men's, and black women, few of whom were in any industrial or office jobs, earned only half of what white women made.

Women needed to unionize. In 1903 an organization was launched that officially and unequivocally investigated conditions of women workers and sought to help them organize. The National Women's Trade Union League united, for the first time, the expertise and funds of middle-class women with a social conscience and the energy and dedication of rank-and-file women workers. Together they exerted an influence far in excess of the organization's always modest membership.

In 1909 the league issued a *Handbook* that described the industries it had investigated, those in which most women worked. This publication underscored the need for collective action to improve working conditions. For example, in describing women in steam laundries the *Handbook* reported:

> How would you like to iron a shirt a minute? Think of standing at a mangle just above the washroom with the hot steam pouring up through the floor for 10, 12, 14 and sometimes 17 hours a day! Sometimes the floors are made of cement and then it seems as though one were standing on hot coals, and the workers are dripping with perspiration. Perhaps you have complained about the chemicals used in the washing of your clothes, which cause them to wear out quickly, but what do you suppose is the effect of these chemicals upon the workers? They are . . . breathing air laden with particles of soda, ammonia, and other chemicals! The Laundry Workers Union . . . in one city reduced this long day to 9 hours, and has increased the wages 50 percent.[14]

The first major test for the league came that same year, when twenty thousand New York City shirtwaist workers walked off their jobs to begin a winter-long strike that would result in shaping a major labor union—the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). This union today remains one of the top two unions in number of women members. Pauline Newman, veteran ILGWU organizer, was among those who walked out of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in November 1909. She describes that day:

> Thousands upon thousands left the factories from every side, all of them walking down toward Union Square. It was November, the cold winter was just around the corner. We had no fur coats to keep warm, and yet there was the spirit that led us on. . . . I can see the young people, mostly women, walking down and not caring what might happen. The spirit, I think the spirit of a conqueror led them on. They didn't know what was in store for them, didn't really think of the hunger, cold, loneliness and what could happen to them. They just didn't care on that particular day; that was *their* day.[15]

The story of the strike is well known: the arrests; the days and nights women strikers spent in the workhouse; the weeks of cold and hunger; and the victories as shop after shop finally recognized the union, 339 shops in all. Some shops, including the notorious Triangle Shirtwaist Company, did not. To these the workers drifted back in defeat.

Though union conditions proved hard to maintain, still the strike, viewed in context, was a great achievement. Thousands of immigrant workers, mostly women, stood firm against employers who had all the force of law behind them. Out of their struggle and sacrifice, with the active support of the Women's Trade Union League, they laid the foundation for a strong international union that could endure.

Just a year later these same workers rallied again, after 146 of their number lost their lives in the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire. This time the struggle was for factory legislation. The owners of the Triangle Company had locked the factory doors so that there was no escape for the women trapped in the burning building. They also had never checked the fire escapes, which crumpled under the weight of workers fleeing the fire. Nevertheless, they were found innocent when brought to trial. An aroused public and a determined union and factory commission (whose chief investigator was Frances Perkins) finally succeeded in getting the New York legislature to pass factory safety and inspection laws. Again the Women's Trade Union League played an important role.

Two other major labor struggles in the first two decades of the twentieth century involved women workers: the strike of men's clothing workers in Chicago in 1910 and the Lawrence textile workers' strike of 1912. In the first, the league again was prominent. The second was one of the triumphs of the Industrial Workers of the World. This loose-knit union organized industrially, opening its doors to the women and blacks and unskilled workers that the craft unions would not take in. However, while it encouraged women to join its staff as organizers, no women ever held key leadership positions, although several, including Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, achieved a national reputation.

The Chicago clothing workers' strike resulted, four years later, in the birth of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, a union whose membership today is over 75 percent female. Here, as in the ILGWU, no woman has ever held a top office at the international level. Women remain a small minority of both unions' executive boards, although many women hold local and regional positions of considerable responsibility.

UNION DOORS OPEN TO WOMEN

As women moved into the same unions as men, unions of women workers became a thing of the past. What did women win or lose through this change? Unions of women workers invariably were small, independent, and financially weak. They lacked staying power, were limited in scope, and operated in isolation from the rest of the labor movement. Women needed to join with men. The combined strengths of both were necessary in the struggle to organize at a time when there were no labor laws giving workers the right to form unions or protecting them against job loss for doing so. There was no such thing as unemployment insurance, food stamps, or welfare programs to assist workers who might face weeks of joblessness through blacklisting.

On the other hand, unions of women workers had provided a chance for women to develop leadership skills, to set forth bargaining demands that represented their interests, and to have what one labor historian has called their "moment in the sun."[16] In unions run by men, women would for almost three generations, and with few exceptions, take a back seat, only gradually asserting their rights to major union leadership positions.

In 1920 women at last won the right to vote. It did not alter the political direction of the country, however, and the decade that followed World War I was difficult for men and women workers alike. The employer-sponsored American Plan to crush unions and the government's anti-Red Palmer raids combined to make the period preceding the Great Depression one of intense hostility to labor organizations. Union membership, not surprisingly, declined drastically. The depression that hit the southern textile industry in the later years of the decade should have served as a barometer of the unhealthy state of the economy, but not many noticed. Four major, but unsuccessful, strikes of southern textile workers in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia—against low wages, the stretch-out and speed-up, and the harassing conditions of mill life—led thousands of workers, many of them women, to endure months of violence, only to return in defeat to the mills. Elizabethton, Marion, Greensboro, Danville, and Gastonia are southern towns that became names in labor history. In the Gastonia (North Carolina) strike, Ella May Wiggins—mother, worker, union activist, and songwriter—was shot and killed. In 1934, just four years later, textile workers struck again, but even in a general strike workers could not match the strength of their employers.

With the Depression, however, came the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. The National Labor Relations Act, passed in 1935, for the first time wrote into law the right of workers to organize into unions of their own choosing. Out of this new spirit, industrial unionism was born: one union for all workers in the same plant or mill rather than many separate craft unions. Breaking away from the AFL, a number of unions that sought to organize this way formed the Committee for Industrial Organization (later the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO). The cry "The President wants you to join the union" swept the country, as thousands of workers rushed to sign up in the new CIO. Shirt workers in Pennsylvania, store workers in five-and-dimes, "baby" strikers fourteen years of age or younger who worked for as little as five cents a week—everyone sat in where they worked or marched on picket lines until union recognition was won.

One of the most famous of the sit-down strikes, that of the auto workers in Flint, Michigan, owed its success in part to the Women's Emergency Brigade, headed by Genora Johnson, wife of a sit-down striker and mother of two young boys. When the brigade was organized to give active support to sit-down strikers in the plant, Johnson told the women: "Don't sign up for this unless you are prepared to stand in the front line against the onslaughts of the police."[17] Five hundred women responded, donning red berets and armbands with "E.B." lettered in white. They were organized in almost military fashion, with five lieutenants working under Johnson. These were women, as Johnson put it, who "could be called out of bed at any hour, if necessary, or sleep on a cot at the union hall."[18]

All through the strike the women saw to it that the men inside the plant got the food they needed. When the National Guard threw tear gas into the factory to force the men out, it was the Emergency Brigade that smashed the windows to let in the fresh air that, some say, saved the strike. Those who were there remember the sight and the sound of the Emergency Brigade as it marched over the hill and down the street to the plant singing:

> Hold the fort, for we are coming,
> Union men be strong,
> Side by side we battle onward
> Victory will come!

WOMEN IN LABOR ORGANIZATIONS TODAY

Women now represent a new force in the labor movement. Over the past twenty years more than half of all new union members have been women. (A number of labor organizations, such as the National Education Association and the American Nurses Association, do not use the term *union* in their title, nor do many state employee associations; they function as collective bargaining organizations with signed agreements, as do labor unions.) The fastest growing labor organizations are those that have been organizing in sectors where increasing numbers of women are employed, in particular the public sector and the health care sector. Today 30 percent of all members of labor unions and associations are women, although only about 16 percent of employed women (7 million out of 44 million) belong to a labor organization.

However, the total number of workers in unions has remained constant. Although the work force has grown, a smaller overall proportion is unionized—today only about 20 percent. This is a result of the decline of the relatively highly unionized manufacturing sector and the growth of the less well organized white-collar and service sectors. Since 75 percent of all women workers are in white-collar and service jobs, it is clear that the labor movement must organize women workers if it is to expand.

This need is recognized at the highest levels of the American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). Recently, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland stated that "the primary concern of the AFL-CIO is [the fact] that working women continue to suffer from widespread wage discrimination in the workplace. . . . The Federation has redoubled its efforts to see that all workers are paid equally for work of comparable value, and to remove all barriers to equal opportunity for women."[19] In 1980 Kirkland appointed the first woman to the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, and in 1981 the second, in response to growing pressure by women unionists for more adequate representation.[20]

The labor movement has shown its awareness of women as members and as rank-and-file leaders in other ways. Since 1974, there has been growing labor support for the Equal Rights Amendment, both by the AFL-CIO and by individual unions on the national and local levels. Today 98 percent of all union contracts include nondiscrimination clauses. Many unions deal with both sex discrimination and sexual harassment complaints as part of their regular grievance procedures. A number of unions that formerly had no women members now have some—such as the plumbers', electricians', and carpenters' unions. And more than three thousand women work in the mines today.

However, women still hold only a small percentage of the top union leadership posts (12 percent), and most of those are appointed, not elected, positions. Women have yet to reach the highest levels, where decisions are made (except for the two on the AFL-CIO Executive Council), although they are moving into regional and district-level positions of responsibility in most unions having substantial numbers of women members. A new awareness has been developing among women in labor organizations—an awareness of themselves as workers with a permanent commitment to the labor force and of their role, potential or realized, in the unions.

In a manifestation of this new awareness, thirty-five thousand women from across the country, from a wide cross section of labor organizations, gathered in Chicago in March 1974 to found a new organization, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). Its purpose was to move more women into leadership roles in the labor union structure and to work within the framework of the labor movement to achieve four major goals:

1. To increase affirmative action on the job and women's involvement in their unions at all levels;
2. To work for legislation important to women workers, on both the federal and the state levels;
3. To foster women's participation in the political process, including encouraging more women to run for office;
4. To help organize the many millions of unorganized women workers in the United States, without whom the labor movement, now at a membership standstill, cannot grow.

The structure of CLUW parallels in many ways that of the labor movement. It has an elected executive board, with representatives of city chapter organizations and the unions whose members participate in CLUW. As of 1982 the organization had sixty-five chapters and fifteen thousand members, but it exerts an influence far beyond these numbers, as the voice of union women. CLUW leaders speak out nationally and locally, testify on legislative issues, and join in coalitions with other women's organizations about concerns of working women. As of 1980, CLUW's president is serving on the AFL-CIO Executive Council.

CLUW's greatest potential for effecting change lies in the opportunities it provides women to meet and learn from other women with different union experiences and to develop political skills that are transferable to their own union situations. Through chapter activities women have the chance to speak in public, run for office, chair committees, conduct chapter business—all important functions for the woman who wants to move up the leadership ladder in her own union. CLUW women often exert influence in their local unions, especially when their numbers are substantial. And the collective effect works both ways, so that unions with numerous CLUW members may have a strong voice in CLUW as well.

CLUW serves to rationalize and legitimize union women's focus on issues related to equality. Although many women workers, union and nonunion, still do not feel comfortable with feminist terminology, they strongly support equal access to jobs and training programs, equal pay for work of comparable worth, child care, maternity and paternity leave, and ways to end sexual harassment. Within CLUW, union women gain support for promoting these issues in their own labor organizations. Although the women's movement also supports these issues, and has done so for many years, working toward these goals within their unions is a more familiar route for union women, one that conforms to their strong labor loyalties.

Early fears that CLUW would siphon off the energies of capable women, leaving them unwilling or unable to tackle the political challenges of running for union office, have proved unfounded. On the contrary, women who have been active in CLUW have moved into a number of important positions in labor organizations, both elected and appointed. Another concern has been that participation in CLUW, which frequently adheres to the programs and policies of the AFL-CIO, might channel women's energies away from the organization of women's caucuses within their own unions. Clearly, union workers must be united when dealing with employers on issues of wages, health and safety, employment, or unsettled grievances. The question is whether a women's caucus in the local union, not always concurring with the union's leadership, might make union leaders more responsive to women's needs.

Indeed, CLUW women in individual unions constitute a logical core for the formation of women's caucuses, because they have gained the know-how through their participation in CLUW chapter committees. The goals of these caucuses include conducting union women's conferences, promoting contract demands, supporting women candidates for negotiating committees and union offices, and using grievance procedures more effectively for sexual harassment complaints. Pressure from women's caucuses has moved local unions to act on statewide legislative issues of special concern to women workers; to support feminist actions, such as marches for the Equal Rights Amendment; and to finance scholarships for the leadership training summer schools held annually on a regional basis for union women, to encourage their participation in the unions. (These schools are conducted by the University and College Labor Education Association [its Committee on Programs for Union Women] with the cooperation of the AFL-CIO Department of Education. In 1982 these schools reached close to five hundred union women in the Northeast, the South, the Midwest, and the West.)

National CLUW has had a similar feminist lobbying effect through resolutions passed at its conventions, in advance of AFL-CIO support of those issues. Examples include the CLUW resolutions on undocumented workers, on the nuclear freeze, and on abortion rights. As CLUW grows in strength, it will be interesting to watch the further impact both of the organization itself and of CLUW activists within their local unions.

WORKING WOMEN: MOBILIZING OUTSIDE THE LABOR MOVEMENT

In city after city throughout the 1970s, clerical and other white-collar workers who do not yet belong to labor unions or associations have been forming mutual support groups to seek raises, respect for the work they do, and an equal chance, theirs by law, to advance on their jobs.

As the technological revolution sweeps the white-collar work place, threatening to make it the assembly line of the 1980s, office workers have voiced increasing concern about the stress and even the health hazards of working at video display terminals all day. They are isolated from their fellow workers and have no voice in the way changes affect their work life.

In the early seventies, clerical workers in several cities began to organize among themselves to improve their working conditions. These groups formed a loose affiliation in 1976 and, in March 1982, took the name of 9 to 5: National Association of Working Women. Today the association has over twelve thousand members and ten chapters, which conduct campaigns against banks, insurance companies, and large offices, sometimes suing under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for salary increases, job posting, and an end to sexual harassment on the job. The association effectively uses mass demonstrations, leaflet campaigns, television spot announcements, and a newsletter to publicize the concerns of clerical workers. It also serves as a consultant to the television series that uses its name: "Nine to Five."

Membership is open to office workers within each city where there is a chapter. (New chapter formation is one of the association's immediate goals.) The association holds that when enough workers within a particular office wish it, union organization is the logical next step, because it offers maximum long-range protection plus the strength of collective bargaining. In 1981, in an unusual move, 9 to 5 joined forces with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) to organize clerical workers into the union. SEIU established a separate unit, District 925, within its international union structure. The president of District 925 is the executive director of 9 to 5. Most of the organizing staff of District 925 comes out of the working women's association. SEIU leadership sees the task of organizing clerical workers as a twenty- to thirty-year effort, and an expensive one. But the union, which already represents fifty thousand office workers, believes the time has come to mount this effort and to use the 9 to 5 chapters, wherever possible, as a base.[21]

With twenty million office workers in the work force to be organized, a number of other major unions (including the Auto Workers; Steelworkers; Food and Commercial Workers; Office and Professional Employees; Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers; and the Service Employees), together with the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), have mounted a joint campaign in the Washington, D.C.–Baltimore area to organize white-collar workers. This is the first time that CLUW has worked directly with international unions to organize the unorganized.[22]

The decade of the 1980s, then, well may be one of wider cooperation and work in coalitions to win gains for women workers. Those inside the labor movement are joining with those outside it to organize the unorganized and to support candidates—particularly women candidates—on state and national levels. Women understand as never before the importance of being fairly represented where decisions are made and laws enacted. The gains of the past twenty years are in great danger.

The foundation on which this new movement for collective action stands owes its existence to the working women of the past, who supplied the building blocks: the Lowell women—who held banners reading "Try Again!"—and the Lynn shoebinders—whose signs proclaimed, "American Ladies Will Not Be Slaves!" Leonora Barry, Pauline Newman, and countless others traveled a lonely road that women today travel together. Although equal pay for work of equal value is still in the future, and some unions still have no women members, women in this country and around the world today are determined to win a full partnership role in the work force, in labor unions, and in political and community life.

NOTES

1. Philip Foner, *The Factory Girls* (Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 309.
2. Barbara Wertheimer, *We Were There: The Story of Working Women in America* (New York: Pantheon, 1977), 56; Edith Abbott, *Women in Industry* (New York: Appleton, 1910), 51–59.
3. John B. Andrews and W. D. P. Bliss, *History of Women in Trade Unions,* Bureau of Labor Report on Conditions of Women and Child Wage-Earners in the United States, vol. 10 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1911), 24, quoting *The Man,* Feb. 22, 1834.
4. Ibid., 71, quoting the *Voice of Industry,* June 5, 1845. For a fuller account of the early mill women, see Wertheimer, *We Were There,* chap. 5.
5. Wertheimer, *We Were There,* 99.

6. A number of books have been written by and about Civil War nurses. For suggestions, see the bibliography of Wertheimer, *We Were There,* 408–10.
7. Andrews and Bliss, *History of Women,* 109, quoting the *American Workman,* Apr. 30, 1870.
8. Cigar Makers' *Journal,* May 10, 1878.
9. Annie Nathan Meyer, *Women's Work in America* (New York: Holt, 1891), 308.
10. For a fuller account, see Wertheimer, *We Were There,* 166–69.
11. Philip Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619–1973* (New York: Praeger, 1974), 34.
12. Andrews and Bliss, *History of Women,* 118–19.
13. Philip Foner, *The History of the Labor Movement in the United States,* vol. 2 (New York: International, 1947–65), 65.
14. *Toward Better Working Conditions for Women,* Women's Bureau Bulletin no. 252 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1953), 14, quoting the *National Women's Trade Union League Handbook,* 1909.
15. Wertheimer, *We Were There,* 301, quoting Pauline Newman, in a talk to Trade Union Women's Studies students, Cornell University, New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Mar. 1975.
16. Connie Kopelov, *Women in American Labor History,* Trade Union Women's Studies course module (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Mar. 1976), 16a.
17. Jeane Westin, *Making Do* (Chicago: Follett, 1976), 310.
18. Ibid., 315.
19. AFL-CIO *News,* May 22, 1982, 7.
20. By custom, Executive Council members of the AFL-CIO are presidents of unions affiliated with the federation. In order to appoint women to the council and to increase the number of minorities as well, the rules of the council had to be amended. The first woman appointed was Joyce D. Miller, a vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union and president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. A year later, in 1981, Barbara Hutcheson, a vice-president of the American Federation of Government Employees, became the second woman on the council.
21. AFL-CIO, Department for Professional Employees, *Note This,* July 13, 1981, C–9, transcript of interview with John Sweeney, Labor News Conference, Apr. 1, 1981.
22. CLUW *News* 8, no. 4 (July–Aug. 1982): 2.

DEBRA RENEE KAUFMAN

Professional women: How real are the recent gains?

Today, nearly 10 million women, or one out of every five of those employed, hold professional or managerial positions. In law, medicine, postsecondary education, and business, the number of women has significantly increased during the last ten years. But the gains that women have made in the professions have been hard won and may well prove even harder to maintain. As Epstein warned in 1970, "No matter what sphere of work women are hired for or select, like sediment in a wine bottle they seem to settle to the bottom" (1970b, 2). What women are allowed to do remains limited, and barriers still restrict their mobility in the professional world. In professions that are as male-dominated today as they were a decade ago, women are still likely to be overrepresented in low-paid and low-prestige subspecialties. However, when men enter female-dominated professions they usually rise to the top.

Society has various expectations of and beliefs about its professionals. It is assumed that they will abide by a code of ethics in dealing with their colleagues and clients and that they will belong to a professional association entrusted with enforcing this code. They are expected to submit to the judgment of their colleagues, since professionals are considered best qualified to judge each other's work. Professionals are expected to make decisions without pressure from clients, the public, or an employing agency. It is believed that professional work benefits the public.

In many respects professionals represent the elite cadre of society's work force. Since professions carry a high degree of honor and status in our society, their members can expect greater rewards for their services. Professional prestige is partly attributable to the fact that professionals are highly educated; their specialized training allows them to draw on a body of knowledge unavailable to lay people. The exclusivity of the professions is also a result of their legal right to exercise a virtual monopoly over the delivery of their service. Professionals are thought to derive a great deal of fulfillment from their work and to enjoy a high degree of autonomy.

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It is not clear, however, that professional women enjoy all the advantages their male colleagues enjoy. Even when women are willing and able to make the commitment to a professional career, most find themselves located in subsidiary positions within prestige professions or in positions that do not accord them the autonomy, prestige, or pay customarily associated with the professional image. (See table 1 for male and female comparisons.)

Table 1 shows that from the beginning of this century to the present the professions have been clearly sex-segregated and that women have earned less than men in each profession. Although there have been clear increases in the numbers of women in male-dominated professions over the past decade, the increases still reflect that, except in academe, women are, for the most part, statistical rarities in the elite professions.

Even in high-pay and high-prestige business categories women have a "second-class" status. For instance, the titles of several 1980 *Wall Street Journal* articles provide some sense of the corporate climate for women—"Women Managers Get Paid Far Less Than Males, Despite Career Gains" (Oct. 7, 1980) and "Few Women Get Top Business Jobs Despite Progress of Past Decade" (July 25, 1980). All the major surveys reported in these articles reveal that women executives are paid less than men. In fact, women comprise less than 5 percent of the executives earning above $40,000 per year in the country's top fifty industrial firms (Berch 1982, 151). However, such statistics do not necessarily reflect the relatively recent entry of women into management positions compared to men. Berch notes that a study of graduates of the Columbia University business administration masters program found that "males and females started their management careers with roughly similar salaries but ten years later the gap for this same cohort of graduates had widened considerably" (pp. 151–52). Although there are more women executives than ever before, most female executives are categorized as either corporate secretaries or assistant secretaries (p. 83).

Similar patterns of limited mobility for professional women emerge from other fields. In medicine, women may no longer be concentrated in the low-prestige specialities such as pediatrics, psychiatry, and obstetrics/gynecology, but it is quite clear that except for general surgery their numbers are not increasing in the more prestigious areas of medical practice. Even more revealing is the fact that women do not earn as much as men within the same medical specialities (Kehrer 1976; Bobula 1980).

Law, academe, and science reflect similar patterns of sex segregation in their professional hierarchies. Patterson and Engleberg have found that "women lawyers are engaged either in low-prestige specialties, such as domestic relations, in which there are large proportions of female clients, or in specialties such as trusts and estates where firms can put them in 'back rooms,' making sure they do not have contact with big clients" (1978, 280–81). In academe, a disproportionately high number of women are in the lowest instructional ranks. Frequently they are not even on tenure track lines. Moreover, whatever their rank, women earn less than men in postsecondary teaching (Vetter and Babco 1978). Women scientists receive lower salaries than comparable male colleagues in every

TABLE 1 *Percent female in eight selected professions, 1900–80*

Profession	1980	1970	1960	1950	1940	1930	1920	1910	1900
Physicians[a]	13.4	9.3	6.8	6.5	4.7	4.4	5.0	6.0	5.6
Lawyers and judges	12.8	4.9	3.5	3.5	2.5	2.1	1.4	0.5	.8
Clergy	5.8	2.9	2.3	4.1	2.7	2.2	1.4	0.5	3.1
Professors[b]	36.6	28.6	21.9	23.3	26.5	32.5	30.2	18.9	6.3
Social workers[c]	64.9	62.8	62.7	69.1	64.3	78.7			
Nurses[d]	95.9	96.1	97.5	97.6	97.8	98.1	96.3	92.9	93.6
Librarians[e]	82.5	82.0	85.5	88.5	89.5	91.3	88.2	78.5	74.7
Teachers[f]	70.8	69.5	72.5	78.8	75.3	81.8	84.5	80.1	74.5

Sources: For 1980: *Supplementary Report from the 1980 Census of Population,* Table 1, "Detailed Occupations and Years of School Completed, by Age for Civilian Labor Force, by Sex, Race, and Spanish Origin: 1980," PC80-51-8. For 1970: *Nineteenth Decennial Census of the United States,* Vol. 1, *Characteristics of the Population,* Part 1, Section 2, Table 221, "Detailed Occupations of Experienced Civilian Labor Force and Employed Persons by Sex, 1970 and 1960," p. I-718. For 1960 and 1950: *Eighteenth Decennial Census of the United States,* Vol. 1, *Characteristics of the Population,* Part 1, Table 201, "Detailed Occupations of Experienced Labor Force, by Sex, for the United States, 1960 and 1950," p. I-522. For 1940: *Sixteenth Decennial Census of the United States: Population: Comparative Occupation Statistics for the United States, 1870 to 1940,* Table 2, "Persons 14 Years Old and over in the Labor Force (except New Workers), 1940," p. 49. For 1930, 1920, and 1910: *Fifteenth Decennial Census: Population: General Report on Occupations,* Table 1, "Gainful Workers 10 Years Old and over, by Occupation and Sex, with the Occupations Arranged according to the Classification of 1930, for the United States, 1930, 1920, and 1910," Vol. 5, p. 20. For 1900: *Twelfth Decennial Census: Population:* Part 2, Table 91, "Total Persons 10 Years of Age and over in the United States Engaged in Each Specified Occupation (in Detail), Classified by Sex, 1900," p. 505.

[a] Osteopaths were included with physicians in 1910, 1970, and 1980.

[b] For "professors" we have used the category "Teachers, College and University" in the 1970 and 1980 censuses. "College Presidents, Professors, and Instructors" was used for the others.

[c] From 1930 to 1960 the decennial reports use the category "Social and Welfare Workers," but the 1930 count is not comparable to those that came afterward. Prior to 1920, social and welfare workers were included in the group "Religious, Charity, and Welfare Workers."

[d] The category used for 1970 and 1980 is "Registered Nurses"; that for 1950 and 1960 is "Nurses, Professional"; that for 1940 is "Nurses and Student Nurses." Before 1930, the category is "Trained Nurses."

[e] In 1910, "Librarians" includes librarian assistants.

[f] "Teachers" is a composite figure for elementary and secondary school teachers from 1960 to 1980. The 1940 and 1950 reports use "Teachers (Not Elsewhere Classified)," and those for 1910 to 1930 use "Teachers (School)" as the category. Prior to 1910, "Teachers" included all teachers of every kind.

field, at every stage of experience, at every degree level, and with every type of employer (American Association of Academic Scientists 1978).

Unlike women entering male-dominated professions, men rise to the top if they choose to enter female-dominated professions. Men are found clustered in traditional positions of authority—supervisor, director, principal. Grimm reports, for instance, that the only variable significantly "related to the hiring of [elementary school] administrators is sex—not age, length and type of experience, or type of position" (1978, 305). He summarizes his findings:

> My previous research has shown that men tend to progress to the higher echelons of nursing and librarianship, as well as social work, at rates that exceed their overall representation in these occupations. Furthermore, I found no evidence to suggest that the disproportionate entry of men into such positions is declining. Evidence on the entry of women into administrative positions in business organizations is similar, suggesting that in general women's careers do not lead them to and through the doors of power [p. 304].

The facts are, thus, that there are far fewer women in the prestige professions than men, that female professionals still occupy the least prestigious specialties and that females earn less for comparable work. These facts suggest that women still face stern barriers to their entry into and advance through professional ranks. What may be even more revealing about women's professional status is that traditionally female-dominated professions are not even perceived as professions.

Although the Bureau of the Census classification lists nursing, primary and secondary school teaching, social work, and librarianship as professions, the sociological literature persists in referring to them as "semiprofessions" (Etzioni 1969; Ritzer 1972). This distinction is more than academic when one realizes that the term *profession* seems to be reserved only for careers structured for the lives that men lead. Such careers are predicated on the notion that the professional is relatively free from child-care and home responsibilities. This permits great investments of time, energy, devotion, and "overtime" work, which are not possible for someone whose primary obligation is to a family. Extensive, difficult, and often expensive schooling is also required for the pursuit of such careers. "Continuity is usually essential," writes Oppenheimer, "and the freedom to move or to stay put, depending on the exigencies of the career, may be an important factor in whether or not success is achieved" (1970, 115).

The major female-dominated professions stand in direct contrast to the male-dominated ones.

> All of [the female-dominated professions] depend on skilled but cheap labor in fairly large quantities . . .; most of the training for them is acquired *before* employment, and career continuity is not essential. They exist all over the country, and hence mobility—or the lack of it—is not usually a serious handicap. Diligence and a certain devotion to the job are required, but long-range commitments and extensive sacrifices of time and energy are not necessary. Employment in most of these occupations relatively infrequently puts the female worker in a supervisory position over male employees, though she may be in a position of relative power over those outside the organization. Nurses, for example, may initiate action for patients, but their authority to do so is derived from the attending physician; furthermore, the authority and the task have a distinctly feminine flavor—that

of the nurturing female. Social workers are often in power positions vis-à-vis clients, but these clients are not in the work organization and are in a notoriously poor position to effect changes anyway [Oppenheimer 1970, 114].

SEX-TYPING AND THE PROFESSIONS

Not only have the professions been segregated by sex; but they have also been greatly affected by the even more invidious process of *sex-typing*. When a majority of those in a profession are of one sex, the "normative expectation" develops that this is how it *should* be (Epstein 1970b). The model of the practitioner then takes on the personality and behavioral characteristics associated with that sex. For instance, in my recent study of accountants, the quality most frequently cited for success and mobility by both young and old, male and female respondents was "executive presence" (Kaufman and Fetters 1983). This term almost perfectly matches what is called in the sociological literature the *male managerial behavioral model*—characterized by aggressiveness, decisiveness, competitiveness, and risk taking. In fact, so identified is male with manager that one writer has stated: "The good manager is aggressive, authoritative, firm and just. He is not feminine" (McGregor 1967, 23). The high-status professions and the prestige specialties in our society are identified with the instrumental, rigorous, "hard-nosed" qualities identified as masculine, not with the "softer," more expressive, nurturing modes of behavior identified as feminine. Since the characteristics associated with the most valued professions are also those associated with men, women fail to meet one of the most important professional criteria: they are not men.

Research on the subject has clearly shown that traits customarily associated with femininity, and consequently with women, are not as highly valued in our society as traits stereotypically associated with men. The belief in strong sex differences persists, although leading scholars clearly state that the overlap between the sexes on most personality and behavioral measures is extensive. Jacklin and Maccoby, for instance, in one of the best reviews to date on the subject, argue that whether there are sex differences in fear, timidity, anxiety, competitiveness, and dependence among young children remains open to debate because of insufficient or ambiguous evidence (1975). They also assert that there is little scientific support for sex differences in such areas as achievement motivation, risk taking, task persistence, or other related skills (p. 37). Yet these traits are typically associated with men in our society and with the pursuit of a successful professional career.

Other studies (Rosenkrantz et al. 1968; Broverman et al. 1970, 1972) have revealed a deep conviction in our society that men and women manifest different characteristics as well as a more positive valuation of those characteristics ascribed to men. Perhaps their most surprising finding was that even mental health clinicians ascribed specific traits to each sex and agreed that a normal, healthy adult more closely reflects those traits ascribed to a healthy male than to a healthy female (Broverman et al. 1970). The clinicians portrayed healthy female adults as more submissive, less independent, less adventurous, less objective, more easily influenced, less aggressive, less competitive, more excitable in minor crises, more emotional generally, more conceited about their appearance, and more apt to have their feelings hurt. This childlike portrait led the authors to remark: "This constellation seems a most unusual way of describing *any* mature healthy individual (p. 5, emphasis mine).

Such stereotypes follow women into the workplace. Even when women do the same work as men, they are not perceived to be as competent as men nor is the work perceived to be as prestigious. In a fine and thorough review of the social–psychological literature on sex-related stereotypes, O'Leary (1977) notes that Feldman-Summers and Kiesler (1974) were unable to find a single occupation in which women were expected to outperform males, even in elementary school teaching and nursing. Touhey (1974a) emphasizes that the anticipation of greater participation by women in high-status occupations has resulted in a decline in the prestige and desirability of these occupations by both males and females. The converse was found in female-dominated occupations entered by males (Touhey, 1974b). In a study by Bass, Krussell, and Alexander (1971), 174 male managers and staff personnel perceived women as unable to supervise men and as less dependable than men. In a more current study of managers' perceptions of sex differences, particularly perceptions relevant to the promotion of women, Rosen and Jerdee (1978) found that male managers and administrators held uniformly more negative perceptions of women compared to men on each of four scales: aptitudes, knowledge, skills; interest and motivation; temperament; and work habits and attitudes. Generally, women were perceived as having aptitudes, skills, interests, and motivations compatible with routine clerical roles and not managerial roles (p. 841). In this study virtually every perceived difference between male and female employees was unfavorable to women aspiring to higher-level occupations (p. 843).

In an earlier study, Rosen and Jerdee (1973) found that males and females are often treated differently in their managerial roles. In a simulated situation, "supervisor" subjects promoted men more often, gave them more career development opportunities, trusted them more in handling personnel problems, and granted them leaves of absence for child-care duties less often than they did with hypothetical female counterparts (1973). However, we need not rely on hypothetical supervisors to know that sex biases exist. Women earn less than men for comparable work in almost every occupation and within almost all specialties within those occupations (Mincer and Polachek 1974, 1978; Sandell and Shapiro 1978; Zincone and Close 1978). Perhaps the best indicator that women are less valued in our society simply because they are female comes from a number of studies documenting that women possessing the *identical* qualifications and skills as men fare more poorly in obtaining professional-type jobs (Dipboye, Fromkin, and Wibac 1975; Fidell 1970; Shaw 1972; Zikmund, Hitt, and Pickens 1978; Firth 1982).

The Fidell study in 1970 was particularly eye-opening for those just entering graduate school at that time and planning on an academic career. Fidell sent one of two forms to all colleges and universities that were offering graduate degrees in psychology in 1970. Each form contained ten paragraphs describing professional characteristics of ten hypothetical psychologists. The person most closely associated with departmental hiring was asked to participate in the study by judging the "candidates" and their chances of obtaining full-time positions. Form A used masculine first names; form B, feminine first names. Except for the names and pronouns, the wording on both forms was identical. Fidell found that men received higher levels of appointments; the positions were more likely to be tenure track; and only men were offered full professorships (pp. 1096–97).

Since the prestige professions are indeed sex-typed, the expectations for men and women differ from the moment they make a decision to train for a career. As graduate students, women are not expected to be as dedicated, ambitious, or serious about their studies as men. It is assumed that marriage and child rearing will eventually interrupt their studies and certainly their careers. The data suggest that such interruptions are indeed more disruptive for women than for men. In a reanalysis of a nationwide sample of graduate students, Feldman (1975) found that divorced men were unhappier with the graduate student role than single or married men, while divorced women were the most highly committed to school and the happiest with the graduate student role of all graduate students. He concluded that "apparently, divorced men are burdened with greater reponsibilities than their single or married counterparts, while divorced women have reduced their responsibilities and are thus freer to pursue the student role" (p. 227).

Such disparities persist beyond graduate school. Of the twenty-four women partners on Wall Street interviewed by Epstein, nineteen were mothers, and some had serious problems arising from motherhood (1980, 310). While marriage for most of Epstein's sample was not regarded as an impediment to career commitment, children were often perceived as a source of problems.

The full-time employed wife/mother bears the largest burden for managing the home and children. Her share of domestic activities is three times as great as that of her full-time employed husband (Pleck 1982). These findings may not simply reflect a generation lag: in Komarovsky's study of Columbia University men, even the "liberated" males in her sample expressed concern about the combination of motherhood and career for their future wives (1976). The majority of the men believed that home and child-care responsibilities were still primarily the concern of the wife/mother (p. 33). Women are competing in the professional world against men who generally have full-time wives at home. Professional careers are not designed for women with families but for men who are free of family obligations. For the professional man, frequent absences from home, tardiness for dinner, and "overtime" work are not only expected but also accepted as evidence that he is a good provider and therefore a good parent and spouse. Such is not the case for the professional woman. (For an excellent discussion of some of these points, see Coser and Rokoff 1971.)

Multiple-role conflict is but one area in which differences exist between men and women in pursuit of professional careers. Another difference has to do with the timing of that endeavor. Hochschild argues that age is measured against one's achievements. Getting there first is an important element of success. "If jobs are scarce and promising reputations important, who wants a 50 year old mother-of-three with a dissertation almost completed?" (1975, 61). Referring specifically to the academic arena, Hochschild states that "time is objectified in the academic vita which grows longer with each article and book, and not with each vegetable garden, camping trip, political meeting or child" (p. 62). A successful professional career requires early achievement and uninterrupted competition for continued success—timing based on a male pattern.

In almost every particular, professional life is oriented more toward males than females. Because women are expected to behave in a generally "softer" way than men, they may be perceived as unsuited for the combative style expected from many professionals. A recent *Boston Globe* article warned that smiling might be bad for women's business careers because it is interpreted by male coworkers as a sign of submission (Varro 1982). This is substantiated by studies suggesting that the way women talk, gesture, smile, touch, sit, walk, and use space communicates their dependent and inferior status in our society. (For a comprehensive review see Frieze et al., 1978, especially chap. 16.) Some feminists have openly challenged the "success ethic" and the values of the professional life, arguing for a more humane (if not feminine) style in the workplace. However, such changes demand a total restructuring of the attitudes and behavior now common in the professions and a redefining and revaluing of what is feminine. The incentives for such change are few, particularly in a tight economy, and, as the following section shows, change generally comes quite slowly.

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Even the fact that only a limited number of women are found in male-dominated professions and that what women do is seen as inferior to what men do represents an improvement over the situation in the past. The professions at the top of the American occupational hierarchy—medicine, law, and higher education—began as medieval guilds from which women were virtually excluded. In the thirteenth century European medicine became firmly established as a secular science, and physicians trained in the universities. Females were excluded from the universities and thereby from the key resource for becoming a professional. However, there was little that we would recognize as science in the late medieval training. Physicians rarely saw any patients, and no experimentation of any kind was taught. Medicine was sharply differentiated from surgery; the dissection of bodies was considered sacrilegious. In contrast, women healers of the same time, who were often labeled witches, had an experimental and empirical base to their healing. "It was witches who developed an extensive understanding of bones, muscles, herbs, and drugs, while physicians were still deriving their prognoses from astrology" (Ehrenreich and English 1973, 17). In fact, "Paracelsus, considered the 'father of modern medicine', burned his text on pharmaceuticals, confessing that he had learned from the Sorceress all he knew" (ibid.).

The key point is that neither knowledge, nor techniques, nor results defined the professional. What defined the professional was access to the universities. Women were barred from practicing medicine as professionals by being denied access to university training. By the fourteenth century the church had explicitly legitimized the professionalism of male practitioners by denouncing healing without university training as heresy. Medieval writings on the subject asserted that "if a woman dare to cure without having studied, she is a witch and must die" (ibid., 19).

The development of the American medical profession was quite different, but the results were the same—women were effectively barred from the profession. By the early nineteenth century, there were many formally trained doctors, "regular" doctors, as they called themselves. At the same time, the Popular Health Movement and numerous other groups with new medical philosophies were establishing their own schools, which were open to women and blacks. Frightened by these new movements, the "regulars" established the American Medical Association, in 1848, thereby asserting themselves as the only legitimate spokesmen for the medical profession. Noting that by definition a profession has authority to select its own members and regulate their practice, Ehrenreich and English emphasize that the "regular" doctors were a formidable obstacle to women. The rare woman who did make it into a "regular" medical school faced a series of "sexist hurdles" that only the most motivated women could manage:

> First there was the continuous harassment—often lewd—by the male students. There were professors who wouldn't discuss anatomy with a lady present. There were textbooks like a well-known 1848 obstetrical text which stated, "She (Woman) has a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love." There were respectable gynecological theories of the injurious effects of intellectual activity on the female reproductive organs. . . . Having completed her academic work, the would-be woman doctor usually found the next steps blocked. Hospitals were usually closed to women doctors, and even if they weren't, the internships were not open to women. If she did finally make it into practice, she found her brother "regulars" unwilling to refer patients to her and absolutely opposed to her membership in their medical societies [1973, 29].

By the early twentieth century "irregular" schools and their students were routinely closed out of the medical profession. Tough licensing laws requiring extended college and clinical training sealed the doctors' monopoly on medical practice (Ehrenreich and English 1973, 33).

Throughout the first seventy years of this century the proportion of women among active American physicians has remained essentially unchanged, around 7 percent. Many factors have contributed to this low percentage—from early gender-role socialization to discrimination in admission practices and policies of medical schools. Over time changes in federal law have helped women to more than triple their enrollment in medical schools from 7.7 percent in 1964–65 to 26.5 percent in 1980–81 (Association of American Medical Colleges 1982). Women now represent 13.4 percent of the medical profession. However, despite this steady increase, women are still primarily located in the less prestigious areas of the profession and earn less in each specialty.

Law, like medicine, began as a medieval guild and has been, until very recently, a male bastion. Women in law, until the last decade, have been "sex segregated in an occupational hierarchy: the lawyers and judges are almost invariably men, while the clerks, paralegal workers and secretaries who work for them are usually women" (Patterson and Engleberg 1978, 277).

It was even more difficult for women to enter the legal profession than it was for them to become doctors. The first woman to be admitted to the practice of law in the United States was Belle Mansfield in 1869. Less than one year later Myra

Bradwell was refused admission to the bar in Illinois solely on the basis of her sex. In the nineteenth century, the legal profession was more highly organized and protected by government than was medicine (Brownlee and Brownlee 1976, 264). Law schools did not admit women until the 1890s and then only reluctantly. And after completing their studies, "even if women did achieve professional acceptance, they usually supported themselves through salaried positions, generally with insurance companies or government agencies, rather than through independent practice" (p. 289). Patterson and Engleberg note that even now women lawyers are still more likely than men to turn to government positions. But what is more important, the authors find that when a man enters a government position he uses it as a "stepping-stone" into private practice, whereas a woman tends to stay put, making it a career (p. 282).

Prior to 1920, women's admission to law schools was not critical, because preparation to practice law could be done by apprenticeships. In 1920 the American Bar Association officially endorsed law school as the desired preparation for the practice of the profession. But it was not until 1972 that women were finally admitted to *all* law schools (Fossum 1981, 579). In addition, there has been evidence of "low quotas and higher entrance standards for women at many law schools" (p. 579).

Despite such obstacles women have made great strides in the legal profession, increasing from 3.3 percent of all lawyers and judges in 1960 to 12.4 percent in 1980 (U.S. Department of Labor 1980, 10). Although women are increasingly practicing in specialties other than the traditional women's fields, they are still heavily clustered in the less prestigious areas of family law, trusts and estates, and tax (Fossum 1981). Even their Wall Street advances from associates to partners must be seen with caution (Epstein 1980, 1981). While more women are making gains in the profession, such advancements may have a different meaning now than at an earlier time.

> For women and minority associates, there is a greater chance of becoming partner, but that position may be a junior partnership bringing a proportionately smaller share of profits at the end of the year. It may also have less power and influence attached to it. There is some suspicion on the part of older women attorneys that this is the kind of partnership young women are likely to get as the firms are feeling pressed to promote their women associates. Although this is definitely a step upward compared to the past, it does not mean that women have "made it" in relation to the men who are rising in the hierarchy [Epstein 1980, 308].

The recruitment of women into the now female-dominated professions has had a different historical pattern. Shortages of cheap but skilled labor, particularly during wars, recessions, and depressions, have accounted for a good deal of the recruitment of women into teaching and nursing. There were several advantages to using females as teachers. They were available in great numbers and they were willing to work for low wages (Lerner 1969). Moreover, this profession did not challenge the cultural ideal of woman's "natural" place. Who could be more "naturally" equipped to teach children than women?

Nursing, too, began as an occupation dominated by men. But, when the Civil War created a shortage of male nurses, women entered the field in significant numbers (Brownlee and Brownlee 1976, 264). The Brownlees contend that the transformation of nursing into a woman's profession did not occur until there was a "sustained entry of educated women who reduced wages below what productivity justified" (p. 264). These were, for the most part, educated women who had been closed out of the prestige professions. Ehrenreich and English, for instance, note that Dorothy Dix and Florence Nightingale did not "begin to carve out their reform careers until they were in their thirties and faced with the prospect of a long useless spinsterhood" (1973, 38).

In nursing, female attributes seemed more important than competence or skill; good nurses were essentially ones who looked good and possessed "character." Ehrenreich and English suggest that the "ideal lady" of the nineteenth century was simply transplanted from home to hospital.

> To the doctor, she brought the wifely virture of absolute obedience. To the patient, she brought the selfless devotion of a mother. To the lower level hospital employee she brought the firm but kindly discipline of a household manager accustomed to dealing with servants [1973, 36–37].

Nursing itself was hard labor; therefore, while the educators remained upper class, the practitioners were mostly working-class and middle-class women. When a group of English nurses proposed that nursing model itself after the medical profession, with exams and licensing, Nightingale claimed that "nurses cannot be examined any more than mothers" (cited in Ehrenreich and English 1973, 37). The occupations of nursing and teaching were extensions of women's "natural" domestic roles.

Despite their numerical dominance in the semiprofessions, women are disproportionately represented in the lower echelons. For instance, although women comprise 96 percent of all elementary school teachers, they make up less than half of all secondary school teachers (48.9 percent), and an even smaller percentage (32.4 percent) of all school administrators, elementary or secondary (Rytina 1982). When men enter these female-dominated professions, as noted earlier, they assume the more respected positions of authority and power within the fields, positions quite consonant with societal views about their "natural" roles.

KEEPING WOMEN DOWN: THE SUBTLE ART OF PRACTICING THE PROFESSIONS

How can we explain women's continuing secondary status within the professions? As we have seen, the prestige professions are defined primarily in terms of men and the lives they lead. The processes that maintain this male model are usually well beyond a woman's control, however committed or dedicated she may be. No matter what her personal characteristics, a woman is often assigned the stereotypical characteristics of her sex, and despite her efforts to transcend these stereotypes, certain structural features of the professions work against her upward mobility.

"Interaction in professions, especially in their top echelons," Epstein points out, "is characterized by a high degree of informality, much of it within an exclusive, club-like context" (1970a, 968). Hughes notes that the "very word 'profession' implies a certain social and moral solidarity, a strong dependence of one colleague upon the opinions and judgments of others" (1962, 125). Those who bear certain characteristics (black, Jewish, female, etc.) are at an immediate disadvantage in such a collegial context. As Hughes (1945) suggested years ago, such statuses condition what is considered an "appropriate" set of characteristics for acceptance by one's peers as a professional; he describes these as "auxiliary characteristics." Such auxiliary characteristics as race, religion, ethnicity, and sex are "the bases of the colleague group's definition of its common interests, of its informal code, and of selection of those who become the inner fraternity" (p. 355). Hughes's fraternal imagery is apt; like fraternal societies, the collegial group depends upon "common background, continual association and affinity of interest" (Epstein 1970a, 972). Almost by definition women and other low-status groups are excluded from such brotherly associations.

Professional "standards of excellence" allegedly establish the criteria for recruitment and advancement in one's field. However, excellence, like any other social reality, is not universally manifest but must be defined and interpreted. As Epstein (1970a) notes, fine distinctions between good and superior performances require subtle judgments, and such judgments are rendered by one's peers. In many ways, one's acceptance into and success within the professions are contingent upon one's acceptance into the informal circles.

> The professions depend on intense socialization of their members, much of it by immersion in the norms of professional culture even before entry; and later by the professional's sensitivity to his peers. . . . Not only do contacts with professional colleagues act as a control system, they also provide the wherewithal by which the professional may become equipped to meet the highest standards of professional behavior [Epstein 1970a, 972].

Those who do not conform because they lack important "auxiliary characteristics" create dilemmas for themselves and others. For example, the protégé system is one of the mechanisms whereby one's name and work become known in the upper echelons of one's profession. According to Epstein (1970a, 1970b), White (1970), and Keller (1974), the men who dominate the top echelons of most professions may be reluctant to adopt female protégés. White claims that "a man . . . may believe that she is less likely to be a good gamble, a risk for him to exert himself for, or that she is financially less dependent upon a job" (p. 414). He may also fear others' suspicion of sexual liaison as a by-product of such close and intense work. While it is not unusual for a senior executive to be a mentor to a rising male star, this acceptable practice immediately becomes suspect if a young female receives it. A lack of sponsorship means a woman is more likely to be excluded from those crucial arenas where professional identity and recognition are established.

Collegial contacts are important for more than one's professional identity and acceptance into the profession. Social psychologist White (1970) interviewed women scholars at the Radcliffe Institute who had been awarded fellowships to continue their professional interests on a part-time basis while raising their families. The women felt that access to stimulating colleagues was as important as the opportunity to be intellectually engaged in a project. White concludes that "appraisals of their work by others, coupled with acceptance and recognition by people whose professional opinions were relevant and appropriate, made a significant difference in determining whether a woman felt like a professional, and whether she in turn had a strong sense of commitment to future work" (p. 413). Furthermore, she suggests that "challenging interaction with other professionals is frequently as necessary to creative work as is the opportunity for solitude and thought" (p. 414).

Collegial contacts are also crucial for survival.

> There are elaborate social systems in all parts of academic and business life, and purely technical training is rarely enough. The aspiring young scientist must be knowledgeable about many aspects of institutions, journals, professional meetings, methods of obtaining source materials, and funding grant applications. Knowing how to command these technical and institutional facilities requires numerous skills, many unanticipated by the young student. . . . This is the kind of learning we speak of as "caught," and not taught, and it is a valued by-product of acceptance and challenging association with other professionals [White 1970, 414].

If women are excluded from male networks, they remain not only marginal but also invisible when such important professional decisions as selection for promotion, tenure, research grants, coeditorships, summer teaching, and departmental privileges are under consideration (Hughes 1973). My research (Kaufman 1977) suggests that women academicians are less likely than men to include those of higher rank in their collegial networks and more likely to claim their colleague-friends as professionally unimportant to their careers.

It is within the collegial arena that judgments are made and standards are set. It is within the collegial arena that the ongoing dynamics of professional life are carried out. If women are denied access to this arena (even if they have formed their own networks), they are left out of the power centers of their professions. Moreover, exclusion from male networks does not permit the breakdown of myths about professional women. If women and men operate in different networks, gender-role stereotypes remain unchallenged (Kaufman and Richardson 1982).

CONCLUSION

How real are women's most recent gains in the professions? Despite their increasing numbers in male-dominated professions, women still comprise a disproportionately small percentage of those practicing the professions. Moreover, in female-dominated professions, as in male-dominated ones, women are in secondary positions compared to men.

Perhaps the most difficult area in assessing women's gains is the "cost" of success. Even when women have been able to achieve high-pay, high-prestige positions within the professions, the costs for such success have been high. Many have had to give up or delay marriage, family, and significant relationships. Those who have not given up family have had to add to their demanding career commitments the major responsibilities of managing home and child-care tasks. In our society families and careers represent "greedy" institutions, and until changes in *both* occur women who want both can expect to face conflicting and overwhelming demands. Moreover, until we change the normative expectations about a woman's place both within the professions and within the home, so that demands and rewards are equal to those of men, we must continue to question the gains women have made.

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JUDITH LORBER

Trust, loyalty, and the place of women in the informal organization of work

When a student walks into a classroom, he or she is not likely to make a particular effort to find a same-sex person to sit near, unless they are friends. On most college campuses today, classrooms, dormitories, extracurricular activities, and social groups are mixed by sex. Yet in the work world, job titles, work sites, promotion tracks, unions, lunch groups, coffee-break groups, and after-work leisure groups all tend to be sex-segregated. Even when sex discrimination is made illegal, the informal aspects of work perpetuate and support occupational segregation. In order to understand the social pressures of the informal organization of work, it is necessary to understand the power of the colleague peer group.

THE COLLEAGUE PEER GROUP

Two seemingly opposing social–psychological tendencies shape work life in male-dominated American occupations and professions. The first is individual competitiveness—often fierce, bitter, and personal, even in areas supposedly objective and dispassionate.[1] The second is the development of team cohesiveness or esprit de corps. The development of the colleague peer group is not really a tendency that opposes aggressive individualism, since informal colleague groups as well as formally structured teams frequently compete with each other. As Maccoby and Jacklin state:

> Male competition in real-life settings frequently takes the form of groups competing against groups (as in team sports), as activity that involves within-group cooperation as well as between-group competition, so that cooperative behavior is frequently not the antithesis of competitiveness.[2]

Except where the occupation is almost exclusively female, women have been excluded from most individual and team competition. The major role of women at

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work has been to be either docile, silent handmaidens or one of the prizes of success. As handmaidens, women keep the operation going smoothly for men;[3] as sexual prizes, they enhance and validate the successfulness of men.[4] In this article, I examine this systematic exclusion of women from the peer groups that dominate all but the almost totally female occupations and professions in American society.

A BAND OF BROTHERS

In most occupations, the organization of work is supposed to be based either on notions of bureaucratic rationality and efficiency or on universalistic professional standards of competence. However, the shared norms of informal work groups are equally, if not more, significant in determining job performance. These informal shared norms determine what is proper and improper behavior in many areas of work, such as rate of production, attitudes toward clients or customers, demeanor toward superiors and inferiors, dress, and major and minor rule violations. The norms are rooted in trust in the members of one's group, an exchange of favors among peers, and loyalty to those who bestow sponsorship and patronage. Thus, in bureaucratic organizations, the formal organization of work is strongly influenced by entrenched peer work groups and empire builders with their loyal followers; in professional organizations, careers are shaped through the patronage and standards of exclusive inner circles; and in blue-collar work, the peer group determines which of management's rules are to be obeyed and which ignored.

While universalistic standards imply an acceptance of any and all who are qualified to do the work, the informal norms serve as overt or subtle bases for inclusion of novices in the inner circles of work life or their exclusion. Those who are excluded are felt to be not quite trustworthy—it is felt that they will be unreliable as colleagues or work partners. As Hughes has said, "The colleague group is ideally a brotherhood; to have within it people who cannot, given one another's attitudes, be accepted as brothers is very uncomfortable."[5]

Those who are excluded from informal work groups are at a disadvantage in filling the true requirements of their jobs, since important aspects of the work experience are not shared with them. Additionally, they are not sponsored for promotion, and, should they gain a formal position of power, they discover it is extremely difficult to find loyal subordinates or exert their authority.[6] Therefore, they rarely rise to truly high levels of power and prestige within their work organizations. As a result, they have fewer resources to offer their colleagues, which further perpetuates their exclusion from the colleague peer groups.[7] To cite Hughes again, the first of their kind to attain a certain status are forever marginal because they are not invited to participate in "the informal brotherhood in which experiences are exchanged, competence built up, and the formal code elaborated and enforced."[8]

Davis, in his essay on the problems the visibly disabled have in group situations, discusses how the handicap becomes the focal point of the interaction, excluding the true focus.[9] Embarrassment is barely contained, stereotypical characteristics are attributed to the deviant, and the "normals" are not sure what can and cannot be expected of the different one. As a result, the deviant is never fully included as a normal participant. Rather, as Davis says, "The interaction is kept starved at a bare subsistence level of sociability. As with the poor relation at the wedding party . . . sufficient that he is here, he should not expect to dance with the bride."[10] For women breaking into male occupations, who also have a visible handicap, the line would go: sufficient we gave her a job, she shouldn't expect to go out to lunch with the boys.[11]

For the woman at work, it is important to know why it is so easy for men to find reasons to exclude women from their inner circles and work peer groups, in what ways this exclusion does or does not resemble the exclusion of some men, and how women can counteract this process.

REASONS FOR LACK OF TRUST OF WOMEN BY MALE COLLEAGUES

Like Trusts Like

Men and women in America are brought up in different cultural worlds. American boys are raised in a world filled with machinery, sports, and superheroes, with the goal of successful conquest; American girls are raised in a world filled with doll babies and dollhouses, clothes, cosmetics, and the goal of successful marriage. They may even be brought up in different *moral* worlds—most American males learn the ideal is to curse, drink, smoke, gamble, and sleep around; most American females learn the ideal is to act virtuously and interest themselves in higher things, such as art, music, dance, literature, religion, and the social welfare of the downtrodden. So, in adulthood, we find men making policy, enforcing work norms, and deciding on sponsorship in smoke-filled rooms, over the three-martini lunch, at poker games, and at parties with prostitutes. As brother breakers of the moral code, men learn to look the other way, and this enforces their trust in each other.[12]

Examples of similar colleague protectiveness can be found in other countries. In Japan, for instance, the all-male after-work bar is the only place a man can go to unburden himself, knowing his colleagues will console him. According to Shaplen, "they protect him and side with him, whether he is right or wrong, in his personal and sometimes his professional affairs."[13] Other examples that come to mind are the working-class pubs and saloons of the British and Irish, and the exclusive clubs of the English upper class, where the members belong to similar occupations or have gone to the same school. Jan Morris can provide some interesting examples of male cohesiveness. Once a male member of a close-knit, homogeneous army unit, she has undergone a sex-change operation and is living as a female.

> Sometimes nowadays I hear a party of men sharing a joke or an experience which, though not necessarily prurient, they would not think of sharing with a woman; and I think to myself not without a wry nostalgia that once long ago, in the tented mess of the 9th Queen's Royal Lancers, they would have unhesitatingly shared it with me.[14]

As upholders of the moral code and traditional moral entrepreneurs,[15] women are not to be trusted to look the other way unless they are the subordinates of men. Secretaries, file clerks, typists, and receptionists know that, if they publicize their boss's dirty secrets, they will be out of a job.[16] As Szymanski points out, because they have access to the details of corporate deals, women must be thoroughly subordinate and loyal.[17] Kanter calls the traditional secretary–manager relationship "patrimonial."[18]

Even as equals, women's moral stance will set them apart from their colleagues. Thus, Mary Anne Krupsak, past lieutenant governor of New York State, described herself in her 1974 election campaign as "not just one of the boys"—an emphasis on both her femaleness and her political purity. Another woman politician, New Jersey State Senator Alene S. Amond, had to file suit because she was barred from party caucuses after she reported to the press secret deliberations that fostered her fellow legislators' interests at the expense of their constituents.[19]

Similarly, men who come from a different cultural background or who are felt to have a different moral code have frequently been excluded from inner circles by those men already entrenched in a particular occupation or profession.[20] The police provide an excellent example of peer-group loyalty based on shared norms of sometimes doubtful morality. According to Stoddard, the police "code" of semilegal and illegal practices is taught to new recruits in informal interaction.[21] At the same time, the "old hands" carefully test the discretion and loyalty of the newcomers to see if they can be trusted.

> All "code" practitioners have the responsibility of screening new recruits at various times to determine whether they are "alright guys," and to teach by example and mutual involvement the limitations of "code" practices. If the recruit accepts such training, he is welcomed into the group and given the rights and privileges commensurate with this new status. If he does not, he is classified as a "goof" and avoided by all the rest.[22]

At present, according to Tyree and Treas, women more frequently than men are found in jobs where they do not share the social background of their peers.[23] Whether the inclusion of women in colleague groups will lead to different attitudes and practices at work or whether they will gradually assimilate the norms of male old hands probably depends on their numbers, the homogeneity of their other social characteristics, and the extent to which they form an in-group of their own.[24]

Sex Games

The second reason women are felt to be disruptive of male inner circles is sex. (The same attitude is held about homosexuals.) When sexual relations are a possibility, the comfortable intimacy of colleague relations is disrupted by the threat of seductions, pursuits, rivalries, jealousies, and the private intimacy of the couple.[25]

The prime loyalty of the couple is to each other, not to the group. They can talk intimately about the others and share opinions. They themselves in turn are treated not as individuals but as a team. They are liked or disliked in tandem. They cannot dispense favors as individuals, or enter another inner circle as an individual, because the others will mentally include the partner in their calculations of trust and loyalty. Thus, the loyalties and enmities of one usually become the loyalties and enmities of the other. Even if they emphasize their individuality, unless they work in widely separated spheres, they may find it easier to operate openly as a team.

Whether membership in a male–female team is advantageous to women is questionable. Epstein feels that, because of incipient jealousy on the part of spouses, women are not likely to be chosen by men as protégés.[26] If they are chosen, she feels that they are not likely to be designated as successors who can attain individual recognition; rather, they are likely to become identified with a particular person and paid off in affection rather than in promotion, salary, or coauthorship.[27] Wilkie and Allen found, however, that while male–female pairs were less likely to rotate the order of names on papers than single-sex pairs, the man was not significantly more likely than the woman to be the senior author.[28] As they put it, "Perhaps traditional roles, which characteristically define, if not the man as the principal, at least one of the pair as the principal, play some part in hampering the development of equal collaboration between professionals of different sexes."[29]

The growing casualness about sex relations in general may soon permit long- and short-term coupling to be compatible with colleague cohesiveness. We may soon see the day when going to bed with a fellow worker will be no more remarked on, should it become known, than going out to lunch. But in order for that to happen, the norms will have to be such that male–female relations do not necessarily imply a special social relationship. In short, women will have to be invited out to lunch in the first place.

Untrustworthy Mothers

The last reason for men's lack of trust in women as colleagues is peculiar only to women, since it concerns their role as mothers. A very long time ago, working women were usually unmarried, childless, or beyond childbearing age.[30] They were thus considered free of the possibility of getting inconveniently pregnant and disrupting the work team. Later, married women left work immediately on becoming pregnant, or, if they were "career women" who planned to continue working, they carefully limited and timed their pregnancies to be least disruptive of work schedules.

Today, such timing is even easier, since a contraceptive failure can be corrected by a legal abortion at an early date. However, while women may be relied on to use contraception fairly efficiently, will they be willing to have an abortion to interrupt an ill-timed pregnancy? Men may feel (or want to believe) that women are not that "cold-blooded,"[31] even though Guttmacher[32] and Rosen and Martindale[33] found that women with feminist orientations are quite willing to have abortions should an accidental pregnancy interfere with career goals.

Women are not expected to be able to put their work before their child's welfare. Yet they are pressured to be available during vacations, and when a child is ill, emotionally troubled, or mentally retarded, to an extent that men are not. Duberman suggests that women do not want to relinquish or truly share their household responsibilities because it is part of their pride in being a woman to be able both to work and to take care of their families.[34] She cites one professional woman who felt that by being good at *all* her jobs—teaching, mothering, and housewifery—she showed up men, who were successful in only their occupational role.

However, by refusing to give up their prime directive, women place themselves in a position of being not quite reliable colleagues to men, who doubt they can do it all—or who want to make sure they do *not* do it all. As Coser and Rokoff have shown, as long as women are the responsible parents, their loyalties to their families will be considered potentially disruptive of colleague relationships.[35]

PRIMARY LOYALTIES: MALE AND FEMALE

The question of primary loyalty goes to the heart of the problem of women and the informal organization of work. If there is a conflict, where should a working woman's loyalties lie—with her colleagues or her love partner? With her work team or her family? With her professional equals or with all women employees?

The traditional sexual division of labor has kept most colleague groups unisex, eliminating to a great extent the disruptive possibilities of sexual relations among colleagues. Formerly, it was a common norm that sexual couples did not work in the same place, so that the open admission of a love relationship between coworkers meant that one person left—usually the one who was lower in status. Thus, the conflict between loyalty to the love partner and loyalty to colleagues was eliminated by written or unwritten antinepotism rules.

Up to now, male colleague loyalties have been part of their main role of economic provider and have enhanced their possibilities of individual success, while female colleague loyalties in industrial society have been secondary to their main role of mother-wife. Is there a way that women can develop colleague loyalties that permit them to succeed as individuals and do not exacerbate interpersonal conflicts? I suggest that there is. Women must develop or strengthen inner circles of their own within male-dominated occupations and professions.

CREATING A BAND OF SISTERS

The present composition of inner circles cannot be combated by strict credentialism. The application of universalistic standards of training and experience to the formerly excluded will only perpetuate their exclusion, since the inner-circle principle starts in training and educational institutions. Since it is a fact of work life that colleagues band together both to shape their work roles and for patronage, sponsorship, and mutual help up the ladder, the formerly excluded must form inner circles of their own and expand their power through their own selective recruitment and sponsorship. Groups of women students in medical and law schools have already successfully expanded the recruitment of women and also changed modes of teaching and curricula to meet their own needs.[36] In the academic world and in the professions, women have used women's caucuses in lieu of individual patrons to find jobs for available women and women for available jobs.[37]

Given the low number of women likely to be found in most male-dominated occupations, women must cast a wide net to form a band of sisters. They must cut across status hierarchies or extend their contacts outside their own particular organizations. Even if their day-to-day commitment is to their immediate workplace and colleague groups, the ultimate commitment of women who want to advance the cause of women must be to other competent, able women.

This process of women developing loyalty to women may become the "new credentialism" of the "insider," as Merton[38] claims, but I feel it is a political necessity at present.[39] Indeed, it seems to have been a political necessity since 1840, when Margaret Fuller advocated that rather than joining with men, women should themselves take up weapons and mutually help each other.[40]

NOTES

1. Ian I. Mitroff, "Norms and Counter-norms in a Select Group of the Apollo Moon Scientists: A Case Study of the Ambivalence of Scientists," *American Sociological Review* 39 (1974): 579–95.
2. Eleanor Emmons Maccoby and Carol Nagy Jacklin, *The Psychology of Sex Differences* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), 274.
3. Albert Szymanski, "Race, Sex, and the U.S. Working Class," *Social Problems* 21 (1974): 724; and Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic, 1977), 69–103.
4. Robert Seidenberg, *Corporate Wives—Corporate Casualties?* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor, 1975), 143, 147.
5. Everett Cherrington Hughes, "Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status," in Lewis A. Coser and Bernard Rosenberg, eds., *Sociological Theory* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 362.
6. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "Women and the Structure of Organizations: Explorations in Theory and Behavior," in Marcia Milman and Rosabeth Moss Kanter, eds., *Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor, 1975), 60–63.
7. Jean Lipman-Blumen, "Toward a Homosocial Theory of Sex Roles: An Explanation of the Sex Segregation of Social Institutions," *Signs* 1 (spring 1976 supplement): 15–31.
8. Hughes, 360.
9. Fred Davis, *Illness, Interaction, and the Self* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1972), 130–49.
10. Ibid., 140.
11. For analyses of the subsequent effects of tokenism, see Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "Some Effects of Proportions on Group Life: Skewed Sex Ratios and Responses to Token Women," *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977): 965–90; and Judith Long Laws, "The Psychology of Tokenism: An Analysis," *Sex Roles* 1 (1975): 51–67.
12. Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, 49–67. She argues that it is the "uncertainty quotient" in managerial decision making that necessitates trust and therefore social homogeneity among corporation managers.
13. Robert Shaplen, "A Reporter at Large: From MacArthur to Miki—III," *New Yorker*, Aug. 18, 1975, 38–65.
14. Jan Morris, *Conundrum* (New York: New American Library, 1974), 34.
15. Herman P. Lantz, Jane Keyes, and Martin Schultz, "The American Family in the Preindustrial Period: From Base Lines in History to Change," *American Sociological Review* 40 (1975): 21–36.
16. B. J. Phillips, "The Secretary's Dilemma," *Ms.*, 3 (1975), 66–67, 120.

17. Szymanski, "Race, Sex, and the U.S. Working Class," 724.
18. Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, 69–103.
19. Donald Janson, "28 New Jersey Senators Ordered to Trial for Closing Caucus to Women Colleague," *New York Times*, Feb. 19, 1975, 1, 39. See also Kristen Amundsen, *A New Look at the Silenced Majority* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 67–68.
20. David N. Solomon, "Ethnic and Class Differences among Hospitals as Contingencies in Medical Careers," *American Journal of Sociology* 61 (1961): 463–71.
21. Ellwyn Stoddard, "The Informal 'Code' of Police Deviancy: A Group Approach to 'Blue-Coat' Crime," in Clifton D. Bryant, ed., *Deviant Behavior: Occupational and Organizational Bases* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1974), 218–38.
22. Ibid., 229.
23. Andrea Tyree and Judith Treas, "The Occupational and Marital Mobility of Women," *American Sociological Review* 39 (1974): 293–302.
24. Kanter, "Some Effects of Proportions on Group Life"; and Judith Lorber, "Women and Medical Sociology: Invisible Professionals and Ubiquitous Patients," in Marcia Millman and Rosabeth M. Kanter, eds., *Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science* (Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor, 1975), 75–105.
25. Donald Roy, "Sex in the Factory: Informal Heterosexual Relations between Supervisors and Work Groups," in Clifton D. Bryant, ed., *Deviant Behavior: Occupational and Organizational Bases* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1974).
26. Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, *Women's Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 169; and Epstein, "Bringing Women In: Rewards, Punishments, and the Structure of Achievement," in Ruth B. Kundsin, ed., *Women and Success: The Anatomy of Achievement* (New York: Morrow, 1974), 13–21.
27. Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, "Ambiguity as Social Control: Consequences for the Integration of Women in Professional Elites," in Phyllis L. Steward and Muriel G. Cantor, eds., *Varieties of Work Experience: The Social Control of Occupational Groups and Roles* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenckman, 1974), 32.
28. Jane Riblett Wilkie and Irving Lewis Allen, "Women Sociologists and Co-Authorship with Men," *American Sociologist* 10 (1975): 19–24.
29. Ibid., 24.
30. Valerie Kincade Oppenheimer, "Demographic Influence on Female Employment and the Status of Women," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1973): 946–61.
31. For limited recent data on male attitudes, see Bernard M. Bass, Judith Krusell, and Ralph A. Alexander, "Male Managers' Attitudes toward Working Women," in Linda S. Fidell and John DeLamater, eds., *Women in the Professions: What's All the Fuss About?* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1971), 63–78; and Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, 106–7.
32. Sally Guttmacher and Dolores Kreisman, "Women's Work, Woman's Role, and Delay in Securing an Abortion" (Paper presented at annual meeting of the American Public Health Association, Chicago, 1975).
33. R. A. Hudson Rosen and Lois J. Martindale, "Abortion as 'Deviance': Traditional Female Roles vs. the Feminist Perspective" (Paper presented at the American Sociological Association annual meeting, San Francisco, 1975).
34. Lucile Duberman, *Gender and Sex in Society* (New York: Praeger, 1975), 128.
35. Rose Laub Coser and Gerald Rokoff, "Women in the Occupational World: Social Disruption and Conflict," *Social Problems* 18 (1971): 535–54.
36. Margaret A. Campbell, *Why Would a Girl Go into Medicine? Medical Education in the United States: A Guide for Women* (Old Westbury, N.Y.: Feminist Press, 1973); and

Elaine Hilberman et al., "Support Groups for Women in Medical School: A First-Year Program," *Journal of Medical Education* 50 (1975): 867–75.

37. Ruth M. Oltman, "Women in the Professional Caucuses," in Fidell and DeLamater, eds., *Women in the Professions*, 123–44.

38. Robert K. Merton, "Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1972): 9–47.

39. For similar sentiments, see Arlie Hochschild, "Making It: Marginality and Obstacles to Minority Consciousness," in Kundsin, ed., *Women and Success*, 194–99; and Cynthia Secor, "Androgyny: An Early Reappraisal," *Women's Studies* 2 (1974): 161–69.

40. Secor, "Androgyny," 169.

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE
EQUAL PARTNERSHIP IN MARRIAGE
SEXISM IS A SOCIAL DISEASE
equal work equal pay
E.R.A. NOW

PART FIVE

Institutions of Social Control

JO FREEMAN

Women, law, and public policy

During the last two decades there has been a revolution in public policy toward women. Beginning with passage of the equal pay law in 1963 and the prohibition against sex discrimination in employment in 1964, Congress has added numerous laws to the books that have altered the thrust of public policy toward women from one of protectionism to one of equal opportunity. While implementation leaves much to be desired, and equal opportunity by itself will not eradicate women's secondary position in society, the importance of this fundamental change should not be underestimated.

Parallel to this development, the Supreme Court has fundamentally altered its interpretation of women's position in society. Until 1971, the judicial approach to women was that their rights and responsibilities, opportunities and obligations, were essentially determined by their position in the family as wives and mothers. Women were viewed first and foremost as members of a dependent class whose individual rights were subservient to their class position. From this perspective virtually all laws that classified by sex were constitutional. Today most such laws have been found unconstitutional. Furthermore, the remaining laws and practices that treat the sexes differently are subject to more searching scrutiny than in the past, and the Court is particularly disapproving of rationalizations for them that encourage dependence.

THE TRADITION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED DEPENDENCE

A brief overview of the laws and judicial interpretations that have affected the position of women amply illustrates the way in which family status formed the basis for women's social status. Not surprisingly, laws on women are most frequently found under the rubric of "family law," whose basic premise was succinctly stated by Justice Black in 1966 as resting "on the old common-law fiction that the husband and wife are one . . . [and] that . . . one is the husband."[1]

The Marital Relationship

The fundamental legal premise of the marital relationship is that husbands and wives have reciprocal—not equal—rights. The husband must support the wife

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and children, and the wife must render services as a companion, housewife, and mother in return. While this doctrine is largely unenforceable in an ongoing marriage, because the courts have held that they should not intervene in an intact relationship,[2] and is only occasionally applied in divorce,[3] the courts have felt that it was so fundamental to public policy that any contract before or during marriage altering the nature of these reciprocal duties is void.[4]

Before the nineteenth-century women's movement arose, the substantive and procedural disabilities incurred by a woman upon marriage were sufficient to make her legally nonexistent. Edward Mansfield, writing the first major analysis of *The Legal Rights, Liabilities and Duties of Women* in 1845, could state:

> It appears that the husband's control over the person of his wife is so complete that he may claim her society altogether; that he may reclaim her if she goes away or is detained by others; that he may use constraint upon her liberty to prevent her going away, or to prevent improper conduct; that he may maintain suits for injuries to her person; that she cannot sue alone; and that she cannot execute a deed or valid conveyance without the concurrence of her husband. In most respects she loses the power of personal independence, and altogether that of separate action in legal matters.[5]

While the sexual division of labor in the marital relationship has never been successfully challenged, passage of Married Women's Property Acts by states throughout the nineteenth century eventually removed the worst of women's legal disabilities. Nonetheless, many were left at the start of the current feminist movement. Despite extensive changes in the last fifteen years, the rights and responsibilities of husbands and wives have yet to be equalized. For example, married women do not have the legal right in all states to retain their own name or maintain a separate domicile. Such equalization would have been the primary effect of the Equal Rights Amendment, had it been ratified.

Family Law

While the diversity and number of the state laws preclude a review of them here, it is important to understand that there are two types of family law systems. Eight states (those originally controlled by France or Spain)[6] adopted a community property system under which each spouse is considered owner of half of the earnings of the other, and all property acquired during marriage (other than gifts and inheritances) is jointly owned by the spouses, regardless of who paid for it or whose name it is in. Traditionally, the man was the head of the household and could manage and dispose of the property as he wished. In 1979 Louisiana became the last state to give both spouses the legal right to manage the community property.[7]

The other states derived their family law systems from the English common law, and thus are called *common law states.* In these states earnings belong to each spouse individually, as does property acquired separately during marriage. Unlike community property doctrine, this principle traditionally did not recognize the contribution made by a wife who worked only in the house. Although the wife generally contributed far more domestic labor to the maintenance of the home than her husband did and, indeed, was required to by the rules of the common law, she had no right to an allowance, wages, or an income of any sort. Nor could she claim joint ownership upon divorce. However, all but three of these states now have rules requiring an equitable distribution in divorce, mitigating the harsh doctrine of the common law. While the definition of marital property varies from state to state, this new approach assumes that marriage is an economic partnership in which both homemaking and financial contributions should be recognized when a division is made, and the judge has a great deal of discretion in deciding what is an equitable or fair distribution of marital property. Thus most states do not take fault or marital misconduct into account in dividing property in divorce actions but look primarily at each spouse's contribution and need. Nonetheless, equitable distribution states do not assume that each spouse has a one-half share of all marital property, as the community property states do; until divorce, each spouse owns only that property to which she or he has title.[8]

SEX AND THE SUPREME COURT

For many decades the courts made it clear that the traditional concern of public policy with a woman's family role went far beyond her legal rights and obligations within the marital relationship. Indeed her family role formed the basis of her legal existence. The earliest case to reach the Supreme Court challenging a discriminatory law was instigated by Myra Bradwell, who objected to Illinois's refusal to admit women to the practice of law. She, and other women, saw the newly ratified Fourteenth Amendment as a means to remove some onerous legal barriers obstructing them. After all, it forbade the states to "abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens." In 1873 the Supreme Court rejected her argument that admission to the bar was such a privilege and immunity of citizenship. Most telling was a concurring opinion by three justices that explained:

> The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life. The constitution of the family organization, which is founded in the divine ordinance, as well as in the nature of things, indicates the domestic sphere as that which properly belongs to the domain and functions of womanhood. The harmony, not to say identity, of interests and views, which belong, or should belong, to the family institution is repugnant to the idea of a woman adopting a distinct and independent career from that of her husband. . . .
>
> It is true that many women are unmarried and not affected by any of the duties, complications, and incapacities arising out of the married state, but these are exceptions to the general rule. The paramount destiny and mission of woman are to fulfill the noble and benign offices of wife and mother. This is the law of the Creator, and the rules of civil society must be adapted to the general constitution of things, and cannot be based upon exceptional cases.[9]

Protective Labor Laws

This rationale continued for almost a century. As late as 1961 Supreme Court decisions reflected a refusal to see women as individual people and a preference for identifying them as members of a class with a specific social role. This preference was especially evident in the long fight to pass protective labor legislation at the turn of the century in an attempt to curb sweatshop conditions. Protective labor legislation restricted the number of hours women could work, limited the amount of weight they could lift, occasionally provided for special privileges such as rest periods, and often excluded women entirely from certain occupations. The first effective law, enacted in Massachusetts in 1874, limited the employment of women and children to ten hours a day. By 1900 fourteen states had such laws, and by the mid-1960s every state had some form of protective labor legislation. There were two forces behind the drive for this legislation. One was organized labor, which saw women workers as competitors to men. Its policy was explicitly stated by President Strasser of the International Cigar Makers Union in 1879: "We cannot drive the females out of the trade, but we can restrict this daily quota of labor through factory laws."[10] The second force was the social reformers who found the Supreme Court unreceptive to protective laws that applied to both sexes.

In 1905 the Supreme Court, in *Lochner v. New York,* declared unconstitutional a New York law that prohibited bakers from working longer than ten hours a day or sixty hours a week. The Court found that "the limitation necessarily interferes with right of contract between the employer and employee . . . [which] is part of the liberty of the individual protected by the Fourteenth Amendment."[11] Three years later, in *Muller v. Oregon,* the Court upheld an Oregon law that restricted the employment of women in factories, laundries, or other "mechanical establishments" to ten hours a day, on the ground that women's

> physical structure and a proper discharge of her maternal functions—having in view not merely her own health but the well-being of the race—justify legislation to protect her. . . . The limitations which this statute places upon her contractual powers . . . are not imposed solely for her benefit, but also largely for the benefit of all. . . . The reason . . . rests in the inherent difference between the two sexes, and in the different functions in life which they perform.[12]

With this precedent, the drive for protective legislation became distorted into a push for laws that applied to women only, on the principle that half a loaf was better than none. Reformers eventually persuaded the Supreme Court that maximum hours and other protective laws were valid health measures for men as well as women,[13] but until recently they never undermined the precedent set by *Muller* that sex was a reasonable basis for classification (but see *Adkins v. Children's Hospital*).[14] Although the rationale of *Muller* had rested on public concern with maternal health, it was cited as a precedent in support of excluding women from juries,[15] different treatment of the sexes in occupational licensing,[16] and excluding women from state-supported colleges.[17]

The Fourteenth Amendment

To understand why *Muller* was so important that it could substantiate such diverse decisions, and to appreciate the significant change in orientation that the Supreme Court began in 1971, one has to understand the structure of legal analysis that has developed around the Fourteenth Amendment. The simple language of section 1 imposed restrictions on State action that had previously been imposed only on the federal government:

> No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

The Supreme Court ruled very early that the "privileges and immunities" clause did not convey to citizens any rights that they had not previously had, and it thus shut off that avenue of legal development.[18] The "due process" clause was for many decades used to undermine state economic regulations such as the protective labor laws found unconstitutional in *Lochner* and *Adkins* and most of the New Deal legislation prior to 1937. Consequently, the quest for equality has focused on the "equal protection" clause.

Until 1971 this quest was a futile one for women. Initially the courts ruled that race and only race was in the minds of the legislators when the Fourteenth Amendment was passed. "We doubt very much whether any action of a state not directed by way of discrimination against negroes as a class or on account of their race will ever be held to come within the purview of this provision."[19] The prohibition on racial discrimination was soon expanded to include national origin[20] and alienage.[21] However, what is prohibited is not *all* official discrimination, but only *invidious* discrimination. If a *compelling state interest* is served by discrimination—such as the need to integrate school districts—distinct laws or state practices based on race or nationality are permitted. The essence of this approach is that certain classifications made by laws are "suspect" and thus subject to "strict scrutiny" by the courts. Unless there is a "compelling state interest" they will be struck down as unconstitutional. Classifications that are not suspect are not subject to the same searching inquiry by the courts. The state need only show that there is a "rational basis" for their existence, and the court will then defer to the legislature.

In practice, classifications that are subject to strict scrutiny are almost always invalidated as unconstitutional. Classifications that need only a rational basis have almost always survived challenges to their constitutionality. The courts have shown great deference to the state legislatures and have gone out of their way to construct rationalizations for legal distinctions that to the untrained eye seem to have only the flimsiest of reasons.[22] The consequence has been a "two-tier" system in which the type of analysis applied to a classification, rather than the reason for the classification, determines the outcome of its constitutionality. The "strict scrutiny" test is usually fatal, while the "rational basis" test is usually meaningless. Thus, in order to eliminate a legal classification, one has to convince the courts that it should be subject to strict scrutiny.

Feminists have been trying to do that since *Muller* declared that sex was a reasonable basis for classification. It was because the National Women's Party and its leader, Alice Paul, did not think the courts would do so, that the Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced into Congress in 1923. Before the start of the current feminist movement these attempts were always unsuccessful. As late as 1961, the attitude that women's family role made sex a legitimate basis for classification was expressed by the Supreme Court in *Hoyt v. Florida,* when it upheld the conviction, by an all-male jury, of a Florida woman for murdering her husband. Women were not required to serve on Florida juries unless they registered such a desire with the clerk of the circuit court; this virtually ensured their elimination from the jury pool, the defendant argued, depriving her of a jury of her peers. The Court replied:

> We of course recognize that the Fourteenth Amendment reaches not only arbitrary class exclusions from jury service based on race or color, but also all other exclusions which "single out" any class of persons "for different treatment not based on some reasonable classification." . . .
>
> In neither respect can we conclude that Florida's statute is not "based on some reasonable classification," and that it is thus infected with unconstitutionality. Despite the enlightened emancipation of women from restrictions and protections of bygone years, and their entry into many parts of community life formerly considered to be reserved to men, woman is still regarded as the center of home and family life. We cannot say that it is constitutionally impermissible for a State, acting in pursuit of the general welfare, to conclude that a woman should be relieved from the civic duty of jury service unless she herself determines that such service is consistent with her own special responsibilities. . . .
>
> This case in no way resembles those involving race or color in which the circumstances shown were found by this Court to compel a conclusion of purposeful discriminatory exclusions from jury service. . . . There is present here neither the unfortunate atmosphere of ethnic or racial prejudices which underlay the situations depicted in those cases, nor the long course of discriminatory administrative practice which the statistical showing in each of them evinced.[23]

The Turning Point: Reed *and* Frontiero

Only ten years later the Supreme Court began to take a different view. The turning point came in 1971 when the Court unanimously held unconstitutional an Idaho statute giving preference to males in the appointment of administrators of estates. In *Reed v. Reed*[24] the Court found the "administrative convenience" explanation of the preference for males to have no rational basis. Although unexpected, this development was not unforeseeable. During the previous few years the Court had been adding a bit of bite to the rational basis test by looking more closely at state rationalizations for *some* classifications, even though they did not trigger strict scrutiny.[25] During the previous two years the emerging women's movement had become publicly prominent, and the Equal Rights Amendment had been battling its way through Congress.[26]

The Court took a still stronger position seventeen months later, when Air Force Lieutenant Sharon Frontiero challenged a statute that provided dependent allowances for males in the uniformed services without proof of actual economic dependence, but permitted such allowances for females only if the women could show that they paid one-half of their husbands' living costs. Eight members of the Court found the statute unconstitutional but they split on the reason. Four applied strict scrutiny, using language very different from that of previous cases:

> There can be no doubt that our Nation has had a long and unfortunate history of sex discrimination. Traditionally, such discrimination was rationalized by an attitude of

> "romantic paternalism" which, in practical effect, put women not on a pedestal, but in a cage. . . .
>
> Moreover, since sex, like race and national origin, is an immutable characteristic determined solely by the accident of birth, the imposition of special disabilities upon the members of a particular sex because of their sex would seem to violate "the basic concept of our system that legal burdens should bear some relationship to individual responsibility. . . ." *Weber v. Aetna Casualty & Surety Co.*, 406 U.S. 164, 175 (1972). And what differentiates sex from such nonsuspect statuses as intelligence or physical disability, and aligns it with the recognized suspect criteria, is that the sex characteristic frequently bears no relation to ability to perform or contribute to society. As a result, statutory distinctions between the sexes often have the effect of invidiously relegating the entire class of females to inferior legal status without regard to the actual capabilities of its individual members.[27]

Three justices did not go so far as to subject the statute to strict scrutiny; instead they applied the rational basis test and found the statute unconstitutional on the authority of *Reed*—that administrative convenience was not a rational basis.[28] These three justices deliberately avoided characterizing sex as a suspect classification, asserting that

> [t]he Equal Rights Amendment, which if adopted will resolve the substance of this precise question, has been approved by the Congress and submitted for ratification by the States. If this Amendment is duly adopted, it will represent the will of the people accomplished in the manner prescribed by the Constitution. By acting prematurely and unnecessarily, . . . the Court has assumed a decisional responsibility at the very time when state legislatures, functioning within the traditional democratic process, are debating the proposed Amendment. It seems . . . that this reaching out to pre-empt by judicial action a major political decision which is currently in process of resolution does not reflect appropriate respect for duly prescribed legislative processes.[29]

Intermediate Scrutiny

In cases after *Reed* and *Frontiero* the Court applied a "strict rational basis" standard with greater and greater scrutiny, until in 1976 a new standard, subsequently referred to as *intermediate scrutiny*, was articulated. On the surface, *Craig v. Boren* did not appear to be a momentous case. It concerned an Oklahoma law that prohibited selling "3.2" beer to men under twenty-one but allowed sales to women over eighteen. The state's rationale for this law was that more than ten times as many males as females between eighteen and twenty-one were arrested for drunk driving. The Court found the law unconstitutional, holding that "classifications by gender must serve important governmental objectives and must be substantially related to achievement of those objectives." The Court was not satisfied that "sex represents a legitimate, accurate proxy for the regulation of drinking and driving."[30]

After *Craig* the Court no longer wrote plurality opinions in which some justices supported use of strict scrutiny in gender cases and others concurred or dissented on a different basis. Instead the heightened intermediate scrutiny standard was applied consistently, though not unanimously, usually to strike down laws that made distinctions by sex. Yet, even before *Craig*, the language of decisions from *Reed* on reflected a very different approach by the Court to women's status. No longer was family status the determinant of women's legal status. Instead the very articulation by a state of the desirability of women's economic dependence or women's unique responsibility for family obligations led the Court to view it as irrational. Two cases decided in the spring of 1975 illustrate this profound transformation from the assumptions of *Hoyt* and earlier cases that a woman's family role created a valid basis for classification by sex.

Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld challenged a provision of the Social Security Act that provided benefits for the surviving widow and minor children of a working man who died but only for the minor children, not the widower, of a working woman who died. The unanimous opinion of the Court pointed out:

> Since the Constitution forbids . . . gender-based differentiation premised upon assumptions as to dependency . . . [it] also forbids the gender-based differentiation that results in the efforts of female workers required to pay social security taxes producing less protection for their families than is produced by the efforts of men.

The Court further recognized the father's as well as the mother's responsibility for child care.

> It is no less important for a child to be cared for by its sole surviving parent when the parent is male rather than female. And a father, no less than a mother, has a constitutionally protected right to the "companionship, care, custody, and management" of "the children he has sired and raised."[31]

A month later the Court went further in *Stanton v. Stanton*, a Utah case in which a divorced father ceased paying child support to his daughter when she reached age eighteen but continued paying for his son, on the ground that in Utah girls were no longer minors after eighteen, but boys were until age twenty-one. The Court found:

> No longer is the female destined solely for the home and the rearing of the family, and only the male for the marketplace and the world of ideas. . . . [I]f the female is not to be supported so long as the male, she hardly can be expected to attend school as long as he does, and bringing her education to an end earlier coincides with the role-typing society has long imposed.[32]

The Supreme Court has continued to strike down state statutes that reinforced role typing and economic dependence or that rested on "archaic and overbroad generalizations." In doing so it has invalidated statutes that provided for Social Security benefits payable to widows but not to widowers,[33] awarded alimony for wives but not for husbands,[34] permitted an unwed mother but not the father to block adoption of illegitimate children,[35] paid welfare benefits to families with unemployed fathers but not unemployed mothers,[36] and paid workers' compensation death benefits to widows but to widowers only if they could prove economic dependence.[37]

Sex-segregated Schools

The Court also ruled for the third time in twelve years on the issue of whether sex-segregated schools were violative of the Constitution, and for the first time, in a very limited context, it held that they were. This change illustrates how far the Court has come in what, for changes in legal doctrine, is a very short period of time. Mississippi University for Women (MUW) had established a Nursing School in 1970. Like the rest of its programs it was restricted to women only. Men could audit classes and participate as though they were students, but they could not matriculate. A male registered nurse who lived in the same town as MUW wanted a B.A. in nursing; he did not want to move to attend one of the other two schools in Mississippi that offered that degree coeducationally. In a five-to-four decision written by the newest member of the Court, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the Court held that "MUW's policy of excluding males from admission . . . tends to perpetuate the stereotyped view of nursing as an exclusively woman's job" and thus is not consistent with the State's justification that the single-sex admissions policy "compensates for discrimination against women and, therefore, constitutes educational affirmative action." Instead the Court found that the state "policy of permitting men to attend classes as auditors fatally undermines its claim that women, at least those in the School of Nursing, are adversely affected by the presence of men."[38]

The Court had found differently only twelve years earlier, when it affirmed without a written opinion the ruling of a district judge that men could not attend South Carolina's female-only state college.[39] The judge had relied on the rational basis test—eight months before *Reed* made that test harder to meet. Midway between these two school cases a more ambivalent Court had split four to four (Justice Rehnquist did not participate) on whether Philadelphia could maintain sexually segregated public high schools. While the city had many coed schools, it had only two college preparatory high schools for academically superior students—one for boys and one for girls. Susan Vorchheimer did not want to be forced to choose between a coed environment and an academically enriched one. The academic schools were similar in their offerings except that the boys' school had a better science curriculum; but Vorchheimer did not maintain that she wanted to attend the boys' high school to avail herself of science courses. The distict court found that the school board could not substantiate "separate but equal" schools, but the court of appeals found otherwise. Placing great weight on Vorchheimer's failure to allege any educational deprivation and on the fact that attendance at the superior schools was voluntary, the court completely ignored the "intangible factors" upon which the Supreme Court had relied in dismantling racially segregated schools. "If there are benefits or detriments inherent in the system, they fall on both sexes in equal measure," said the circuit court. By dividing equally on appeal the Supreme Court left the decision in force, but the case lacked the value as a precedent that an affirmation would have given it.[40]

Current Rationales for Sex-discriminatory Laws

The circuit court in *Vorchheimer* had relied on the Supreme Court decision in *Kahn v. Shevin* in upholding sex-segregated schools. *Kahn* had established one of the two rationales on which sex discriminatory statutes have continued to be upheld: that women benefit. Decided in 1974, before *Craig* but after *Frontiero*, it upheld a Florida statute giving widows, but not widowers, a $500 property tax exemption.

The Court majority ruled that the state law was "reasonably designed to further the state policy of cushioning the financial impact of spousal loss upon the sex for which that loss imposes a disproportionately heavy burden."[41] The Court did not question whether another indicator of financial incapacity might be more appropriate than sex. Even after *Craig* established a more stringent standard than reasonableness, the Court continued to look favorably on statutes that it felt operated "to compensate women for past economic discrimination." *Califano v. Webster* upheld a Social Security provision that, prior to 1972, permitted women to eliminate more of their low-earning years from the calculation of their retirement benefits than men could eliminate, because it "works directly to remedy some part of the effect of past discrimination."[42]

Schlesinger v. Ballard introduced the second rationale, that men and women are not "similarly situated." Federal statutes that allowed more time for female than for male naval officers to attain promotion before mandatory discharge were upheld on the ground that they served the goal of providing women equitable career advancement opportunities. The Court found that, because women were restricted from combat and most sea duty, it would take longer for them to compile favorable service records than it took men. Therefore, "the different treatment of men and women naval officers . . . reflects, not archaic and overbroad generalizations, but, instead, the demonstrable fact that [they] are *not* similarly situated with respect to opportunities for professional service."[43] This explanation was also relied on to uphold a California statute that made statutory rape a crime that only males could commit against females. The state supreme court had already subjected the classification to "strict scrutiny" and found that the statute served a "compelling state interest" in preventing teenage pregnancies. Applying the lesser standard of "important governmental objectives," the Supreme Court came to the same conclusion, but only by ignoring the dissent's objection that a sex-specific statute was not "substantially related" to a stated goal as long as a gender-neutral one could achieve the same result.[44]

Draft Registration Cases

This line of cases led inexorably to *Rostker v. Goldberg*, which contested the requirement that males but not females register for a potential draft. Draft registration had been discontinued in 1975, but it was reactivated by President Carter in 1980 as part of his response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In his request to Congress for funds for this purpose, Carter also asked that the statute be amended to permit registration and conscription of females. After extensive debate, Congress left the statute intact. This activated a lawsuit that had begun in 1971 but had been dormant for many years. Three days before draft registration was to begin, a lower federal court found the act unconstitutional and enjoined the government from further registration. Relying on the intermediate scrutiny test of *Craig*, the court concluded that "military opinion, backed by extensive study, is that the availability of women registrants would materially increase flexibility, not hamper it."[45] The injunction was lifted and registration continued while the Supreme Court pondered the effect of its new approach to gender cases on the oldest bastion of the male establishment. The Court was caught between the conflicting demands of two institutions to which it had traditionally deferred—Congress and the military. The Court has always accorded great weight to the decisions of Congress, which had restricted registration to men. It has also deferred to judgments by the executive departments in the area of military affairs, and the military had testified before Congress that women should be registered (though not drafted). However, the Court noted that Congress's thorough consideration of the issue had clearly established that its decision to exempt women was not the "accidental by-product of a traditional way of thinking about females." The Court concluded that the "purpose of registration . . . was to prepare for a draft of *combat* troops" and that "[w]omen as a group, . . . unlike men as a group, are not eligible for combat." Because men and women were not "similarly situated" with regard to military service, it was not unconstitutional to distinguish between them. "The Constitution requires that Congress treat similarly situated persons similarly, not that it engage in gestures of superficial equality."[46]

On the surface it might seem desirable for the Court to require equality where men and women are similarly situated and to make exceptions apparently in women's favor where they are not. However, since there are very few circumstances in which men and women are similarly situated, this line of thought could easily lead to a return of the inequitable protectionism of the *Muller* era. The different standards that *Muller* legitimated for men and women provided only limited benefits. In the long run women were protected from better jobs, overtime, and the opportunity to compete with and be independent of men rather than dependent on them.

An example of the consequences of protecting women from military service is to be found in *Personnel Administrator of Massachusetts v. Feeney.* While the federal government and almost all states give veterans preference for civil service jobs, Massachusetts is one of the few that gives them an absolute preference. After job candidates' scores have been computed on the basis of an examination and an assessment of their training and experience, those who pass are ranked. However, all veterans who pass are ranked ahead of all nonveterans.[47] Consequently, nonveteran Helen Feeney had never been hired for one of the many civil service jobs she took exams for over a twelve-year period, even though she scored very high. During this period she held a lower level civil service job that was abolished in 1975, prompting her lawsuit. A lower federal court held the statute unconstitutional on the ground that, while it was not intended to discriminate against women, its impact was unlawfully severe, since only 1.8 percent of the veterans in Massachusetts were female; the state should be required to find a less extreme form of rewarding veterans. The Supreme Court found otherwise. Ignoring the fact that, until recently, women were restricted to only 2 percent of the armed forces, the Court nonetheless said that a neutral law with an adverse impact is unconstitutional only if discriminatory intent can be shown. It rejected the argument that the exclusion of women was such an inevitable and foreseeable consequence that the Massachusetts legislature must be held responsible for intending it even if that were not its primary objective. Instead, the Court stated that "the law remains what it purports to be: a preference for veterans of either sex over nonveterans of either sex, not for men over women."[48]

Lower Federal and State Cases on Gender-based Laws

Not all cases challenging gender-based laws reach the Supreme Court. Since *Reed* hundreds of cases have been resolved by lower federal or state courts. In most cases the federal courts, following the lead of the Supreme Court, have held gender-based distinctions to be invalid. Sometimes they have not done so, and the case has not been appealed to the Supreme Court, or the Court has denied review. When this happens, the geographical area over which the lower court has jurisdiction must abide by that court's decision, but courts elsewhere are free to formulate their own (though they are often influenced by other courts). Courts have held laws to be constitutional that forbid a person of one sex to massage a person of the other sex, forbid B girls (but not boys) to solicit patrons for drinks, and forbid a mother to sign the driver's license application of a minor if the father is alive and has custody. A Maryland law was upheld that made it more difficult for husbands than wives to prove libel if accused of extramarital sexual activity. Laws that have been held unconstitutional include those that denied a wife the right to sue a third party for loss of consortium (a spouse's companionship) when her husband was injured, prohibited some bars from serving beverages to women, established different ages for males and females to be tried in juvenile court, set different sentences for male and female convicts, and required that "Miss" or "Mrs." appear before a woman's name on her voter registration affadavit.[49]

When state courts have had to rule on gender-based laws or other state actions, they have generally looked to the Supreme Court and its current equal protection analysis, even when state ERAs might have provided a different standard. Since 1968, fifteen states have added some form of equal rights provision to their state constitutions or included one in a general constitutional revision. They are: Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. Eight use language similar to that of the proposed federal amendment. Most of the others have clauses patterned after the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment with sex included as a category. Utah and Wyoming included similar provisions in their original constitutions when they became states in 1896 and 1890 respectively.

The state judicial decisions are highly varied. Washington and Pennsylvania courts have taken an even stricter approach than the Supreme Court, striking down virtually all gender-based statutes including ones that excluded women from contact sports dominated by men.[50] Several state supreme courts have avoided interpreting their ERAs by deciding cases on other grounds or refusing to review them at all. Utah, Louisiana, and Virginia have followed a traditional "rational basis" standard and found virtually all sex-based laws to be reasonable. Several states have applied the "strict scrutiny" standard,[51] and others have relied on lesser standards (usually derived from the latest Supreme Court language) or not articulated a specific standard. Thus laws that have been struck down in some states have been upheld in others. Even in states, such as Illinois, where the highest court has held sex to be a suspect class, lower state courts have applied the rule inconsistently, with the result that statutes invalidated in one jurisdiction are upheld in another.[52]

Of the states that do not have ERAs, only California and Oregon have declared sex to be a suspect class, and California did so a few months before *Reed.*[53] Oregon did not even rely on the federal Constitution; the state supreme court, in 1982, interpreted a long-standing state constitutional prohibition against granting any citizen or class of citizens special privileges to invalidate legal classifications by sex.[54] Several other states have followed the Supreme Court in finding many sex-based statutes to be unreasonable. Yet even these states have found statutes to be rationally related to reasonable goals such as those permitting wives to share in their husband's property after divorce, but not vice versa,[55] and prohibiting girls from having paper routes before age eighteen.[56] Some issues, such as maternal preference in custody cases, have provoked extremely varied responses: the Utah Supreme Court found it "wise" that children should be in the care of their mother; Maryland permits the use of maternal preference as a tiebreaker; but in New York, where voters rejected a state ERA, a court held that the maternal preference rule violated the Fourteenth Amendment.[57]

While courts acting under a state ERA are not limited to the standard equal protection analysis, few have chosen to break new paths. Those with ERAs are likely to apply a stricter standard than those without, but most tend to follow the lead of the Supreme Court. Judges also respond to legislative history, the political culture of their geographic area, current public debate, and their perception of the customs and mores about proper sex roles. In effect, courts are not institutions removed from society and responding only to legislative dictate and abstract legal analysis. Nor is the law static. Instead it is a tool, only viable when it is actively used. The changes in judicial attitude of the last few years have not occurred in a vacuum. They have been as much a response to the women's liberation movement as the many legislative changes have been.

LEGISLATIVE GAINS

The legislative changes in public policy have been as vast as the judicial changes but they began earlier. The first federal law to improve women's economic position was the 1963 Equal Pay Act. First proposed in 1868 at the National Labor Union Convention, it did not become a national issue until World War I. During the war women held jobs previously held by men, creating concern that they would depress the wage rates and that men would be forced to work at the lower rates after the war. Montana and Michigan enacted the first state equal pay laws in 1919, but it was not until after World War II that a major bill covering 61 percent of the labor force was placed before Congress, and it took another fifteen years before the bill was passed.[58]

Title VII and the EEOC

When Congress debated the 1964 Civil Rights Act, one of the most controversial sections in it was Title VII, which prohibited discrimination in employment. In one of the many ploys by its opponents, Representative Howard W. Smith (D. Va.) proposed a floor amendment to add "sex" to "race, religion, color and national origin." While this provision was strongly supported by the women of the House, especially Representative Martha Griffiths (D. Mich.), who claimed she intended to make such a proposal herself, most of the House liberals opposed it, as did the Women's Bureau of the Labor Department. They were concerned that this additional responsibility would dilute enforcement efforts for minorities. Nonetheless, neither side felt strongly enough about it to spend more than a few hours in debate before passing the amendment and little of this debate was serious.[59] The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), created to enforce Title VII, responded to this mandate by ignoring the sex provision. This led several people within the EEOC, and many without, to feel the need for an organized group supporting women's rights to put pressure on the government. As government employees, the EEOC members could not organize such a group, but they spoke privately with people who they thought could do so, including Betty Friedan and members of state commissions on the status of women. Partially as a result of their efforts, the National Organization for Women was formed in 1966 and directed a good portion of its initial energies to changing the guidelines of the EEOC.[60]

The ERA

Initially the EEOC supported protective labor laws, largely because organized labor had fought for them for years and argued that they were a necessary protection for women. Yet many blue-collar women who felt they had been denied job opportunities by employers on the basis of state protective laws saw Title VII as an opportunity to take their cases to court. As decisions were repeatedly made in their favor, virtually all such laws were rendered void, or were subsequently applied to men as well. These court rulings—none of which reached the Supreme Court—not only forced the EEOC to change its rules but also paved the way for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. The primary opposition to the ERA, since its first introduction in 1923, had come from organized labor, which wanted to retain protective labor laws. By 1970 this issue was eliminated by Title VII and the facts coming out of the cases filed under it. The cases indicated that labor laws applying only to women caused them greater harm than benefit. Thus, as the new feminist movement was turning its attention to the ERA, its only major opposition was fading from the field. After a two-year battle led by Martha Griffiths in the House, involving a potpourri of feminist, women's, establishment, and liberal organizations, the Equal Rights Amendment was sent to the states for ratification on March 22, 1972.

Other Federal Legislation

Although the ERA was not ratified, the two-year congressional battle had some very beneficial side effects. It created a perception in the Ninety-second Congress that there was serious constituent interest in women's rights, and it established liaisons between feminist organizations and congressional staffs. With this impetus the same Congress that sent the ERA to the states passed a bumper crop of women's rights legislation—considerably more than all relevant legislation previously passed in the history of this country. These laws (1) expanded the coverage of Title VII and the enforcement powers of the EEOC; (2) prohibited sex discrimination in all federally aided education programs (Title IX of the Education

Amendments Act); (3) added sex discrimination to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; (4) prohibited sex discrimination in state programs funded by federal revenue sharing; (5) provided free day-care for children of poor families and a sliding fee scale for higher income families (this bill was vetoed by President Nixon); (6) provided a child-care tax deduction for some parents; and (7) added prohibitions against sex discrimination to a plethora of federally funded programs, including those on health training, Appalachian redevelopment, and water pollution.

Subsequent Congresses have not passed as many major laws but they have been active. New laws include the Equal Credit Opportunity Act; the Women's Educational Equity Act, which provides grants to design programs and activities to eliminate stereotyping and achieve educational equity; creation of the National Center for the Control and Prevention of Rape; an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act requiring that particular attention be given to programs, projects, and activities that tend to integrate women into the national economies of foreign countries; prohibitions of discrimination in the sale, rental, or financing of housing; an amendment to Title VII to include pregnancy in employment disability insurance coverage; admission of women to the military academies; and the addition of still more antidiscrimination provisions to federally funded programs.

The states have also been active arenas in the last fifteen years. Laws have been passed in most states prohibiting sex discrimination in employment, housing, and credit. Some states also prohibit discrimination in insurance, education, and public accommodations. Most states now have no-fault divorce provisions; all but four have equal custody and support laws (two others have equal custody laws but mandate support only for the wife). The changes have been partially a result of pressure from feminist and other public interest groups and partially in response to changes in federal legislation and Supreme Court decisions. Many states have followed the lead of the federal government in conducting studies to identify gender-based distinctions in their laws and to recommend changes. Most of these studies were undertaken in response to efforts to adopt a state ERA or ratify the federal amendment.[61]

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Although the successes of feminist groups in achieving legislative changes are notable, there are also some outstanding failures. The most prominent is the failure to stop the anti-abortion movement from curtailing women's constitutional right to abortions. The most unnoticed is the failure to make child care a national issue; after presidential vetoes by Nixon and Ford, all Carter had to do was have a member of his administration testify against a proposed bill in 1979 to kill it in the Senate committee. Feminist groups also failed, largely by not trying, to retain a provision to lessen veterans' preference in the 1978 Civil Service Reorganization Act. Their attention that year was devoted solely to extending the deadline to ratify the ERA.

The veterans' preference issue aside, the failures are largely on issues that touch on the family.[62] They suggest that the biggest challenge in developing future public policy affecting women will be breaking the tradition that a woman's obligations and opportunities are and should be primarily defined by her family circumstances. While most of the legislation, administrative decisions, and court rulings of the last two decades have ignored women's family status, they were able to do so because the particular issues were economic ones. In a time of an expanding economy and expanding welfare roles, it seemed expeditious, even conservative, to enhance a woman's right to support herself. But there is still a fundamental assumption by society that the principal economic unit is the two-parent family, in which only one adult is the primary wage earner and the other is a dependent.

It is this assumption that feminist theory and feminist policy proposals need to challenge. Feminist proposals must recognize that all adults should have responsibility for the support of themselves and their children, regardless of their individual living situation, and that all are entitled to policies that facilitate carrying out this responsibility, regardless of sex, marital, or parental status. Acceptance of this idea would require an entire reconception of what women's role is in the labor force, of what a family is, and of what society's obligations to it are. It would also involve the recognition that a person cannot have primary responsibility both to a career and to a family, and that modifications should be made in both careers and families, so that, rather than dividing such responsibilities by sex as they do now, women and men can participate equally in both.

The current attitude toward the employment of women can best be characterized as supporting "equal employment opportunity." This view asserts that women who are like men should be treated equally with men. Though much improved over earlier views, it accepts as standard the traditional male life-style, in which one's primary responsibility should and can be one's job, because one has a spouse (or spouse surrogate) whose primary responsibilities are house and family. Women whose personal life-style and resources permit them to fit these assumptions, could, in the absence of sex discrimination, succeed equally with men.

Most women cannot, however, because our society's traditional conceptions of the family and women's role within the family make this impossible. Despite the fact that only 20 percent of all adults now live in units composed of children plus two adults, only one of whom produces income, our entire social and economic organization assumes this as the norm and maintains that it is socially desirable for one class of adults to be economically dependent on another. Consequently, couples who equalize family responsibilities, or singles who take them all on, pay a price for deviance. Yet women who spend the greater part of their lives as dependent spouses only to find their "career" ended by death or divorce pay a price for conformity. The fact that a majority of the population is paying these prices is compelling some reforms, but what is needed is a total reorganization.

This reorganization must abolish institutionalized sex-role differences and the concept of adult dependence. It has to recognize the individual as the principal economic unit, regardless of the combinations individuals choose to live in, and to provide the services individuals need to support themselves and help support their children. In pursuit of these goals, programs and policies need to establish that everyone has both a right and an obligation to participate in the labor force to the full extent of his or her abilities. They should also encourage and facilitate the equal assumption of family responsibilities, without regard to sex, and develop ways to reduce conflict between professional and private lives. While transition policies are necessary to mitigate the consequences of adult dependence, the goal should be abolition of the sexual division of labor. Transition policies should not permanently transfer dependence from "breadwinners" (male earners) to society in general, nor should they encourage dependence for a major portion of a woman's life by extolling its benefits and minimizing its costs. Instead, transition policies should educate women to the reality that they are ultimately responsible for their own economic well-being and are entitled to the opportunities to achieve it.

Needless to say, the consequences of such policies would be felt not merely by women; they would reverberate throughout our entire economic and social structure. Thus we should not anticipate their achievement in the near future. But we will not be able to anticipate their achievement at all until the ideas are raised and the need for change understood. To do this, the movement needs to return to its origins and begin the process of questioning and consciousness raising all over again.

NOTES

1. *United States v. Yazell*, 382 U.S. 341, 361 (1966) (Black, J., dissenting).
2. *McGuire v. McGuire*, 157 Neb. 226, 59 N.W.2d 336 (1953).
3. A survey sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Commerce on the receipt of child support and alimony payments and the economic conditions surrounding divorce showed that (1) of the 7.1 million women who had children at home under twenty-one years of age from an absent father, only about 60 percent were awarded or had an agreement to receive child support payments, (2) only 49 percent of these received the full amount they were due, which represented an average of $1,800 or 20 percent of the mother's total income, (3) of the 14.3 million ever-divorced or separated women, only about 14 percent were awarded or had an agreement to receive alimony or maintenance payments, (4) only 25 percent of these received anything in 1978, and only 15 percent received full payment, which represented an average of $2,850 or 26 percent of the divorcee's average income. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Child Support and Alimony: 1978*, Current Population Reports, Series P–23, Special Studies, no. 112 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, Sept. 1981), 1–2.
4. A good discussion of this is to be found in Lenore J. Weitzman, "Legal Regulation of Marriage: Tradition and Change," 62 *California Law Review* 1169–288, at 1259–63 (July–Sept. 1974).
5. Edward Mansfield, *The Legal Rights, Liabilities and Duties of Women* (Salem, Mass.: Jewett and Co., 1845), 273.
6. Arizona, California, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Washington.
7. Louisiana's "head and master" law permitted a husband the unilateral right to dispose of jointly owned community property without his wife's knowledge or consent. In 1974 Joan Feenstra had her husband incarcerated for molesting their minor daughter. To pay the attorney who represented him in this action he executed a mortgage on

their home, which she had paid for solely out of her earnings. Although the charges were eventually dropped and a legal separation obtained, the attorney foreclosed on the mortgage, and Joan Feenstra challenged the constitutionality of the statute in federal court. During the legal proceedings, Louisiana changed the law to permit equal control, but only prospectively. However, the Supreme Court declared that the original statute had been unconstitutional, and it invalidated the mortgage. *Kirchberg v. Feenstra*, 450 U.S. 455 (1981).

8. Note, "New York's Equitable Distribution Law: A Sweeping Reform," 47 *Brooklyn Law Review* 67–124 (1980–81).
9. *Bradwell v. Illinois*, 83 U.S. (16 Wall.) 130, 141–42 (1873) (Bradley, J., concurring). See also *Ex parte Lockwood*, 154 U.S. 116 (1893).
10. Quoted in Alice Henry, *The Trade Union Woman* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1915), 24.
11. *Lochner v. New York*, 198 U.S. 45, 53 (1905).
12. *Muller v. Oregon*, 208 U.S. 412, 422 (1908).
13. *Bunting v. Oregon*, 243 U.S. 426 (1917).
14. An exception was minimum wage legislation, which the Supreme Court would not uphold for either men or women, until Justice Roberts's dramatic reversal in 1937 of his opposition to Roosevelt's New Deal legislation shifted the direction of the five-to-four decisions. Compare *Adkins v. Children's Hospital*, 261 U.S. 525 (1923), with *West Coast Hotel Co. v. Parrish*, 300 U.S. 379 (1937).
15. *Commonwealth v. Welosky*, 276 Mass. 398, 414, 177 N.E. 656, 664 (1931), *certiorari denied*, 284 U.S. 684 (1932).
16. *Quong Wing v. Kirkendall*, 223 U.S. 59, 63 (1912); *People v. Hunter*, 208 Ore. 282, 288, 300 P.2d 455, 458 (1956).
17. *Allred v. Heaton*, 336 S.W.2d 251 (Tex. Civ. App.), *certiorari denied*, 364 U.S. 517 (1960); *Heaton v. Bristol*, 317 S.W.2d 86 (Tex. Civ. App.), *certiorari denied*, 356 U.S. 230 (1958).
18. *Slaughter House Cases*, 83 U.S. (16 Wall.) 36 (1872).
19. Ibid.
20. *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 118 U.S. 356 (1886).
21. *Traux v. Raich*, 239 U.S. 33 (1915).
22. Laurence H. Tribe, *American Constitutional Law* (New York: Foundation Press, 1978), 994–1002. "Strict scrutiny" is also employed where fundamental rights, such as voting, travel, procreation, criminal appeals, or those protected by the First Amendment, are involved.
23. *Hoyt v. Florida*, 368 U.S. 57, 59–62, 68 (1961). The systematic exclusion of women from the jury pools for criminal trials was finally declared unconstitutional in 1975. However, the decision in *Taylor v. Louisiana*, 419 U.S. 522 (1975), rested on a defendant's Sixth Amendment right to have a jury representative of the community. Thus its application to grand juries or civil juries is unclear. Traditionally, under the English common law, juries had been composed exclusively of men except in certain situations involving a pregnant woman. In this country the First Judiciary Act of 1789 mandated that federal jurors should have the same qualifications as those of the state in which the federal court was sitting, and no state permitted women to sit as jurors until Utah did so in 1898 (35 Utah Rev. Stat. Ann. § 1297). Federal practice was changed by the Civil Rights Act of 1957 (28 U.S.C. § 1861), which provided that all citizens, with a few exceptions, were qualified to sit on federal juries. State practices continued to vary for many years.
24. *Reed v. Reed*, 368 U.S. 57 (1971).
25. Tribe, *American Constitutional Law*, 1082.

26. Jo Freeman, *The Politics of Women's Liberation* (New York: David McKay Co., 1975), 147–48, 213–20.
27. *Frontiero v. Richardson,* 411 U.S. 677, 684, 686–87 (1973). This opinion was subscribed to by Justices Brennan, Douglas, White, and Marshall.
28. The three were Justices Powell, Burger, and Blackmun. Justice Stewart concurred without joining either opinion, and Justice Rehnquist dissented for the reasons stated in the district court opinion (*Frontiero v. Laird,* 341 F. Supp. 201 [M.D. Ala. 1972]) that administrative convenience *was* a rational basis. If Stewart had joined the four justices who wrote the plurality opinion, sex would have become a "suspect" classification. This would have changed many subsequent judicial decisions and perhaps made the state and federal ERAs *legally* unnecessary.
29. *Frontiero v. Richardson,* 411 U.S. at 692.
30. *Craig v. Boren,* 429 U.S. 190, 197, 204 (1976).
31. *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld,* 420 U.S. 636, 645, 652 (1975).
32. *Stanton v. Stanton,* 421 U.S. 7, 14–15 (1975).
33. *Califano v. Goldfarb,* 430 U.S. 199 (1977).
34. *Orr v. Orr,* 440 U.S. 268 (1979).
35. *Caban v. Mohammed,* 441 U.S. 380 (1979).
36. *Califano v. Westcott,* 443 U.S. 76 (1979).
37. *Wengler v. Druggists Mutual Insurance Co.,* 446 U.S. 142 (1980).
38. *Mississippi University for Women v. Hogan,* 73 L. Ed. 2d 1090, 1100, 1101–2, 102 S. Ct. 331 (1982). However, Congress, in Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments Act, had specifically authorized the continuance of any single-sex public undergraduate institution that "traditionally and continually from its establishment has had a policy of admitting only students of one sex" (20 U.S.C. § 1681 [a]), so this ruling probably applies only to the school of nursing and not to the entire university.
39. *Williams v. McNair,* 401 U.S. 951 (1971), *affirming* 316 F. Supp. 134 (D. S.C. 1970).
40. *Vorchheimer v. School District of Philadelphia,* 430 U.S. 703 (1977), *affirming by an equally divided court* 532 F.2d 880, 886 (3d Cir. 1976), *overturning* 400 F. Supp. 326 (E.D. Pa. 1975). In 1983, Philadelphia integrated the two schools without court intervention.
41. *Kahn v. Shevin,* 416 U.S. 351, 355 (1974).
42. *Califano v. Webster,* 430 U.S. 313, 318 (1977). Ruth Bader Ginsburg argues that this case is very different from *Kahn* in that the "Court's majority opinion . . . carefully distinguishes knee-jerk categorization by sex from legislation deliberately enacted to compensate for discriminatory conditions encountered by a group not dominant in society. . . . *Webster* thus attempts to preserve and to bolster a general rule of equal treatment while leaving a corridor for genuinely compensatory classification." She feels that this kind of "affirmative action" should be constitutional. Ruth Bader Ginsburg, "Some Thoughts on Benign Classification in the Context of Sex," 10 *Connecticut Law Review* 822–23 (1978). While she was a professor at Columbia University Law School and General Counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union, Ginsburg was the principal author of the brief in *Reed* and argued before the Supreme Court in *Goldfarb, Wiesenfeld, Kahn,* and *Frontiero.* She is currently a judge on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.
43. *Schlesinger v. Ballard,* 419 U.S. 498, 508 (1975).
44. *Michael M. v. Superior Court of Sonoma County,* 450 U.S. 464, 472, (1981). Most states have gender-neutral statutory rape laws. Prior to this case, three circuit courts had struck down gender-based statutory rape laws, and the Supreme Court had declined a request for review of one of them. See *Navedo v. Preisser,* 630 F.2d 636 (8th Cir. 1980); *U.S. v. Hicks,* 625 F.2d 216 (9th Cir. 1980); and *Meloon v. Helgemoe,* 564 F.2d 602 (1st Cir. 1977), *certiorari denied,* 436 U.S. 950 (1978).

45. *Rostker v. Goldberg,* 509 F. Supp. 586, 603 (C.D. Pa. 1980), *reversed,* 453 U.S. 57 (1981).
46. *Rostker v. Goldberg,* 453 U.S. 57, 74, 76, 79 (1981). Women are restricted from combat in the Navy and Air Force by statute (10 U.S.C. §§ 6015, 8549), and in the Army and Marine Corps by internal policy.
47. The benefits to veterans of this affirmative action program can be seen in statistics on the federal civil service, which gives only a point (not an absolute) preference in computing scores. In 1979 women were 41 percent of those who passed the entry-level Professional and Administrative Exam but only 27 percent of those who were hired. Veterans were 20 percent of those who passed but 34 percent of those hired. Women were 41 percent of the civilian labor force but only 30 percent of the civil service. Veterans were 25 percent of the labor force but held 48 percent of all federal civil service jobs. Because many veterans were career military officers, who were retired after only twenty years with excellent pensions, training, and experience, they held 65 percent of the three highest grades in the civil service, while women held only 3.2 percent. Jo Freeman, "Women and Public Policy, An Overview," in *Women, Power, and Policy,* ed. Ellen Boneparth (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), 61.
48. *Personnel Administrator of Massachusetts v. Feeney,* 442 U.S. 256, 280 (1979), *overturning* 451 F. Supp. 143 (D. Mass. 1978). The Court has held that gender-neutral distinctions that nonetheless had a discriminatory impact were not unconstitutional in two other cases. *Geduldig v. Aiello,* 417 U.S. 484 (1974), upheld the exclusion of pregnancy from coverage under the California disability insurance system. The Court said that the "program does not exclude anyone from benefit eligibility because of gender but merely removes one physical condition—pregnancy—from the list of compensable disabilities. While it is true that only women can become pregnant, it does not follow that every legislative classification concerning pregnancy is a sex-based classification." 417 U.S. at 496 n.20. *Parham v. Hughes,* 441 U.S. 347 (1979), concerned a Georgia statute that permitted mothers but not fathers of illegitimate children to sue for the wrongful death of a child. Since fathers who subsequently legitimated their children could also sue, the court found that the actual distinction in the law was not one of gender but one between fathers who did and those who did not legitimate their children. In this case, like the previous one, a finding that the distinction was not gender-based led the court to apply the rational basis test and conclude that the statute was reasonable.
49. These cases and others are reviewed by Daniel A. Per-Lee, "Validity, under Equal Protection Clause of Fourteenth Amendment, of Gender-based Classifications Arising by Operation of State Law—Federal Cases," 60 *Lawyer's Edition Second* 1188 (1979).
50. However, even Washington upheld the denial of a marriage license to two males on the grounds that both sexes were affected equally by the requirement that legal marriages be heterosexual. *Singer v. Hara,* 11 Wash. App. 247, 522 P.2d 1187 (1974).
51. But this has not prevented them from upholding school regulations restricting the length of boys' but not girls' hair (*Mercer v. Board of Trustees,* 538 S.W.2d 201 [Tex. Civ. App. 1976]), or prison regulations that required women visitors to male prisons to wear brassieres (*Holdman v. Olin,* 581 P.2d 1164 [Hawaii 1978]).
52. Comment, "Equal Rights Provisions: The Experience under State Constitutions," 65 *California Law Review* 1086–112 (1977); Paul M. Kurtz, "The State Equal Rights Amendments and Their Impact on Domestic Relations Law," 11 *Family Law Quarterly* 101–50 (1977); Dawn Marie Driscoll and Barbara J. Rouse, "Through a Glass Darkly: A Look at State Equal Rights Amendments," 12 *Suffolk University Law Review* 1282–311 (1978); Philip E. Hassman, "Construction and Application of State Equal Rights Amendments Forbidding Determination of Rights Based on Sex," 90 *American Law Reports Third* 158–216 (1979).
53. *Sail'er Inn v. Kirby,* 5 Cal. 3d 1, 485 P.2d 529, 95 Cal. Rptr. 329 (1971), invalidated a state statute prohibiting women from tending bar.

54. *Hewett v. State Accident Insurance Fund Corp.*, 294 Ore. 33, 653 P.2d 970 (1982).
55. *M. v. M.*, 321 A.2d 115 (Del. Sup. Ct. 1974).
56. *Warshafsky v. Journal Co.*, 63 Wis. 2d 130, 216 N.W.2d 197 (1974).
57. Compare *Cox v. Cox*, 532 P.2d 994 (Utah 1975); *Cooke v. Cooke*, 21 Md. App. 376, 319 A.2d 841 (1974); *State ex. rel. Watts v. Watts*, 77 Misc. 2d 178, 350 N.Y.S.2d 285 (Fam. Ct. 1973).
58. Freeman, *The Politics of Women's Liberation*, 174–77.
59. For a thorough documentation of this event, see Caroline Bird, *Born Female: The High Cost of Keeping Women Down* (New York: David McKay Co., 1968), chap. 1. For a blow-by-blow account of the floor happenings, see *Congressional Record*, House, 88th Cong., 2d sess., 8 Feb. 1964.
60. *The Politics of Women's Liberation*, Freeman, 54.
61. U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, *Time of Change: 1983 Handbook on Women Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984), chap. 7; U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, "Working Paper on Studies of Sex Discrimination in State Codes" (October 1981).
62. Joyce Gelb and Marian Lief Palley, *Women and Public Policies* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982), 7, argue that success is more likely when the issue is perceived as affecting role equity—extending to women the rights enjoyed by other groups—rather than role change.

NAOMI B. LYNN

Women and politics: The real majority

> *If the majority of women are little attracted to political careers, it is because everything tends to turn them away from them: if they allow politics to remain essentially a man's business, it is because everything is conducive to this belief: tradition, family life, education, religion and literature. . . . The small part played by women in politics merely reflects and results from the secondary place to which they are assigned by the customs and attitudes of our society and which their education and training tend to make them accept as the natural order of things.*
>
> *Maurice Duverger*[1]

The political activities of American women comprise a mixed record that ranges from minimal tokenism to limited achievement. Politics has strategic importance for women because the ultimate success of the women's movement will rest heavily on effective use of the political process. Women will never achieve political equality until they hold powerful decision-making positions in numbers that reflect approximately their percentage of the total population. Furthermore, women's present status is incompatible with the democratic norms used to justify the very existence of American society.

WOMEN AS VOTERS

The Women's Suffrage Movement

A major turning point for women came in the 1830s when the early efforts of American northern women to secure the abolition of slavery demonstrated the effectiveness of agitation for human rights.[2] Soon after slavery was abolished, the issue of women's suffrage came to the fore. The first victories came in areas where women represented a minority of the population, such as the American West and

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New Zealand. In 1869 the territory of Wyoming gave women the right to vote. Three years later Susan B. Anthony voted illegally in the presidential election, for which she was later convicted in court. Anthony drafted the Woman Suffrage Amendment that was finally ratified in 1920.

After 1920, the women's suffrage movement was faced with a decision. Should it exert its considerable influence in party politics, or should it shift to nonpartisan efforts? The National American Woman Suffrage Association decided on the second route, and such groups as the League of Women Voters became a main focus of women's political attention for decades.[3] The move was justified by a desire to keep women united and to hold all officeholders accountable to all women, but it did dilute the force of women's political power. As one observer has said, "Looking back across the years since the 19th Amendment we can see where women erred. Winning the vote was accepted as an end in itself, which it was not. Having won political power, women have never used it. Therein lies our failure."[4]

Women's Voting Patterns

Voting, like any other behavior, can become a habit, but it must be supported by norms and expectations regarding legitimate behavior. Women who were not involved in the consciousness-raising efforts of the suffrage movement were uncomfortable about exercising their new voting rights.[5] A 1924 study of Chicago women revealed that 11.4 percent of them still did not believe women should vote.[6]

Social norms were quite effective in shaping voting patterns: immigrant women and southern women were tied to the traditional view that political affairs were a man's purview. In the West, women had been forced by the realities of frontier life to take an active part in the social and economic life of the community. John Stucker found that when barriers to voting were lifted, immigrant and white southern women had a much lower voting turnout than western women.[7] Women's suffrage in the South was further complicated by efforts to disenfranchise blacks. Poll taxes, literacy tests, and long residence requirements made it almost impossible for black women to vote.[8]

The gradual increase in women voters occurred in part because older generations, who had been brought up with the idea that voting was a man's prerogative, were gradually replaced by later generations, who grew up after women's suffrage had become a fact of life. The civil rights legislation of the 1960s also facilitated black female voting.

Political scientists have been studying electoral behavior as demonstrated by surveys since 1948. Their findings show that women voted less than men and that there were few sex differences in party preferences and issue positions. Table 1 shows the overall record of voting by men and women from 1948 to 1980.

The 1980 election was the first since the 1948 study began in which there was no significant male–female difference in the percentage voting.[9] An increase in female voting may be explained, in part, by the larger female population. In 1979, women of voting age outnumbered men of voting age by 7 million. It is predicted that this difference will grow to 9 million by the year 2000.[10] A closer look at the

TABLE 1 Percentages of men and women voting in presidential elections, 1948–80

	Percentage voting								
Sex	1948	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980
Men	69	72	80	80	73	69	76	78	73
Women	59	62	69	69	60	66	70	69	70

Source: The data used in this table were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The data were originally collected by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, for the National Election Studies, under the overall direction of Warren E. Miller. Neither the original collectors of the data nor the consortium bears any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

Note: These percentages are estimates subject to normal sampling errors. There is a tendency for individuals to overreport voting, but this overreporting appears to be equally divided between the sexes.

1980 election shows that age made a difference: women under forty-five voted more heavily than men in the same age group.[11] The Census Bureau estimates that by 1984 the percentage of women voting will be higher than the percentage of men, because women who attain voting age vote more frequently than their male counterparts.

THE REAL MAJORITY

Party Identification

Until 1982 the party identification of men and women was generally similar, though men were slightly more likely to be identified with no party than were women. Men and women shifted party identification with little discrepancy between the sexes. Since 1980 women have been moving to the Democratic fold at a slightly faster pace than men. In May 1982 the New York Times/CBS Poll indicated that 55 percent of women identified themselves as Democrats and only 34 percent as Republicans. For males the figures were 49 percent Democrats and 37 percent Republicans (see table 2).

Age appears to be a critical factor in gender-based party preference (see table 2). Women in the eighteen to forty-four age group are one-third more likely than men to call themselves Democrats. This becomes especially significant because this is also the age group in which women outvoted men. Examining his own supporting data on party identification, Louis Harris concluded:

> For the Democrats, this means that just on the basis of sex difference, their entire margin today is dependent on the vote of women. One can only conclude that a major area of concentration for the Democrats must be to nurture and sustain those positions and causes that hold special relevance for women. For President Reagan and the Republicans, the single and most formidable obstacle to their becoming a majority party in the 1980s is the vote of women.[12]

TABLE 2 Party alignment by sex and age group, 1982

	Percentage (rounded)														
	Age 18–24		Age 25–34		Age 34–44		Age 45–54		Age 55–64		Age 65 and over		Total		Total
Party alignment	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Both sexes
Republican	21	31	22	18	26	17	20	24	25	20	28	23	23	22	23
Independent with leanings toward Republican	14	14	17	16	10	20	9	16	8	9	6	10	11	15	13
Independent	12	12	13	17	12	18	7	14	11	10	12	13	11	14	13
Independent with leanings toward Democratic	21	19	16	19	14	16	14	15	10	10	7	12	14	16	15
Democratic	33	24	39	29	38	29	50	31	44	52	47	42	41	33	37

Source: New York Times/CBS News Polls taken in January, March, and May 1982, combined, reported in *New York Times*, June 30, 1982, D21.

The "gender gap" was particularly acute in the 1980 presidential election. In 1976 men favored Carter and women favored Ford, but in 1980 women gave Carter significant support, almost as much as they gave Reagan, while men favored Reagan by twenty percentage points (see table 3). Kathleen Frankovic concludes that the "consistent pattern of more negative evaluations from women than from men, on a variety of personal and performance evaluations, suggests that the root of the problem may be the President himself and the way he is viewed by women."[13]

Women and Issues

In the early 1970s, studies demonstrated that women do differ from men in their stands on some issues. Gallup data and the 1972 Virginia Slims Poll showed that women are less likely to seek military solutions to international problems. On the issue of Vietnam, more women classified themselves as doves. The greater value that women apparently have come to place on human life went beyond war to the issues of capital punishment and social welfare.[14] Note that these are the very issues on which a conservative candidate such as Reagan would be at a disadvan-

TABLE 3 The vote by sex in presidential elections, 1952–80

		Percentage	
Year	Candidate	Men	Women
1952	Eisenhower	53	58
	Stevenson	47	42
1956	Eisenhower	55	61
	Stevenson	45	39
1960	Kennedy	52	49
	Nixon	48	51
1964	Johnson	60	62
	Goldwater	40	38
1968	Nixon	43	43
	Humphrey	41	45
	Wallace	16	13
1972	Nixon	63	62
	McGovern	37	38
1976	Carter	53	48
	Ford	45	51
1980	Reagan	56	48
	Carter	36	45
	Anderson	8	8

Sources: *Gallup Opinion Index*, Dec. 1976, Report no. 137; 1980 data from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The data were originally collected by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, for the National Election Studies, under the overall direction of Warren E. Miller; Maria Sanchez was Director of Studies in 1980. The data were collected under a grant from the National Science Foundation. Neither the original collectors of the data nor the consortium bears any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

tage compared to a candidate such as Carter. Only on issues where their own children were involved, such as school busing, were women more conservative than men. This may also explain their distaste for military solutions.

More recent studies support these earlier findings. Women as a group are poorer, and economically more vulnerable than men; thus, they may be unhappy with the Reagan economic policies that affect them more negatively; one example is his proposal to repeal minimum benefits in Social Security. Women have

TABLE 4 Gender differences in views on major issues, 1982

	Percentage				
Respondents' views	Women, age 18–44	Men, age 18–44	All women	All men	Both sexes
Those approving Reagan's job performance	44	54	41	50	45
Those fearing Reagan will get United States into war	57	42	52	38	46
Those who would vote for Reagan backer for House	39	50	37	47	42
Those who would vote for advocate of different policies	51	38	48	40	44
Those who would permit women to have abortions in first three months	56	59	48	53	50
Those favoring proposed Equal Rights Amendment	62	64	53	55	54
Those considering Reagan's life-style extravagant	55	40	52	39	46
Which party is best on unemployment:					
Republicans	21	30	19	26	22
Democrats	51	46	54	50	51
Which party is best on inflation:					
Republicans	32	44	29	42	35
Democrats	39	29	37	31	34
Which party is best on Social Security:					
Republicans	21	35	22	31	26
Democrats	55	46	54	49	52
Which party is best on defense:					
Republicans	32	46	29	41	35
Democrats	41	29	37	30	33

Source: New York Times/CBS News Polls, 1982, reported in *New York Times*, June 30, 1982, D21. Responses to the first two questions represent combined percentages from polls conducted in January, March, and May; results for the third and fourth questions are combined from January and May polls; all others are from individual polls.

become more sophisticated, and they are realizing that economic issues are women's issues. Table 4 (p. 407) shows gender differences on some major issues. The eighteen to forty-four age group is shown separately because that is the group in which a higher percentage of women than men voted.

Kathleen Frankovic examined women's issues, women's economic position, women's household situation, and issues of war, peace, and the environment. She concluded that it was the latter three issues—war, peace, and environment—that related most directly to the different evaluations women and men gave Reagan.[15] Women were concerned about foreign policy issues, and, since their socialization patterns did not require that they take a "macho" stance, they were more willing to be cautious about actions with a potential for increasing international tensions.

Younger men and women equally support the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion, so the gender gap is not widened by these issues. However, some public opinion analysts say these issues are more salient for women than for men.[16]

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Questions about women's political participation are made more difficult because what we consider "political" has been based mainly on male models. Many questions about political participation do not even consider some of the political activities that may occupy a woman's time. Getting a stop sign installed in front of a school may involve organizing, petitioning, lobbying, bargaining, and various other kinds of political pressure, yet researchers may neglect to classify this as political activity. With this in mind, we will look at women's political activities using Lester Milbrath's traditional hierarchy of political involvement.[17] A hierarchy is used because political participation tends to be cumulative—that is, persons who engage in the higher level activities are likely to perform those lower in rank also. The lowest rank consists of what Milbrath calls *spectator activites.* These include voting, wearing a button, and putting a sticker on the car. *Transitional activities* are on a higher level and include contacting a public official, contributing money to a political party, or attending a political meeting or rally. *Gladiator activities* include contributing time to a campaign, becoming active in a party, and at the highest level being a candidate or holding public office (see table 5).

The primary difference between men and women occurred in how many gave money to political parties. In 1980 the rate for both men and women dropped and equalized. However, the very low 1980 figures may be misleading. In recent years there has been an increase in political contributions made through the tax checkoff or directly to candidates and political action committees rather than to parties. Perhaps women are still contributing less to campaigns, since men are more likely to be in positions, occupations, and organizations where political contributions are expected and asked for, and women generally have lower incomes than men. At other levels in the hierarchy there are minimal differences between the percentage of men and women participating; it is apparent that women have been more active than is generally assumed.

Another political activity in which men are significantly more active is in trying to influence other voters (males 39.8 percent, females 33.2 percent).[18] This

TABLE 5 Hierarchy of political involvement by women and men, 1968–80

Activity	Year	Percentage Women	 Men
Gladiator activity			
Working for a party or candidate	1968	6.1	5.3
	1972	5.7	4.2
	1976	4.5	4.4
	1980	4.0	2.9
Transitional activities			
Attending a political meeting	1968	4.8	4.5
	1972	8.2	9.8
	1976	6.8	5.7
	1980	7.2	8.0
Giving money to a party	1968	Not available	Not available
	1972	9.2	12.0
	1976	6.9	11.1
	1980	3.3	4.1
Spectator activity			
Wearing a button or putting a sticker on the car	1968	14.1	15.8
	1972	14.1	14.0
	1976	8.1	7.0
	1980	6.8	6.6

Source: The data used in this table were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The data were originally collected by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, for the National Election Studies, under the overall direction of Warren E. Miller. Neither the original collectors of the data nor the consortium bears any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

may reflect women's lower sense of political efficacy. Political efficacy is the extent to which an individual believes she or he can influence the political system. Males feel more efficacious than women at each educational level. For example, in 1980 only 44.3 percent of college-educated women disagreed with the statement: "Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on," while 58.8 of college-educated males disagreed. This lack of confidence is borne out by the substantially higher proportion of women who are unwilling or unable to give an opinion or who are not informed about political issues.[19]

Being employed outside the home appears to have a positive effect on some levels of political participation. The work experience may give women the additional self-confidence necessary to become more active in politics. It appears that when both sexes are highly educated and employed, any discrepancy between male and female political participation disappears.[20]

THE WOMAN CONVENTION DELEGATE

Party conventions are an integral part of the American political system. It is at party conventions that the formal decisions are made about the major presidential candidates and the party platform, which spells out the party's position on public issues. At conventions various factions come together to discuss common problems and to indulge in the bargaining and compromising that create the coalitions that comprise our national parties. At conventions party leaders interact with rank-and-file members to learn about concerns and potential troublespots in the coming election. For many party workers, attending a convention is viewed as a reward for years of faithful service. Conventions provide political scientists with data on party elites. Much of what we know about party activists (both male and female) comes from delegate studies.

A few women were delegates to the national party conventions prior to suffrage, but there was a notable jump after the right to vote was secured. In 1920 the Democratic National Committee was expanded to include one woman as well as one man from each state and the Republicans followed suit in 1924. No effort was made to require equal representation of the sexes at the national party conventions prior to 1976, though the Republicans had equal representation on the main convention committees (whose members did not have to be delegates).[21] The number of women at these conventions fluctuated between 10 and 17 percent until the 1972 Democratic National Convention (see table 6). That gathering applied new rules requiring affirmative action to encourage proportionate representation of minorities, young adults, and women in each state delegation. The Democrats did not set quotas, but they did establish guidelines and specified that, if a state delegation was challenged, the lack of proportional representation would be viewed as prima facie evidence of violation of the guidelines. The result of these guidelines and of activities by women's organizations such as the National Women's Political Caucus was an enormous jump in female delegates to 40 percent of the total that year. The Republicans had no such compelling rules but were under pressure internally to follow the Democratic example. At their 1972 convention, 30 percent of the delegates were women. By 1976, there was a backlash by the Democratic "regulars" who had felt excluded in 1972 and wanted back in. They blamed "quotas" at the convention for Democratic defeat in the election. The rules were changed for 1976 to emphasize good intentions rather than good results. They still required affirmative action, but, if a state party submitted and followed an approval plan, it was not really held responsible for inadequate results.[22] Only 34 percent of the Democratic delegates

TABLE 6 Women delegates at major party conventions, 1952–80

	Percentage of women delegates							
Party	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980
Democratic	12.5	11.6	11.1	14.2	13.3	39.9	33.7	49.8
Republican	10.5	15.7	15.1	17.8	16.7	29.8	31.5	35.9

Source: Compiled by Martin Gruberg and Jo Freeman with assistance from Christine Way Lynn and various staff members of the Democratic and Republican National Committees.

were women in 1976. The Republicans had not had any major fight over their delegate selection rule, which emphasized states' rights and only said, "Each state shall endeavor to have equal representation of men and women in its delegation." About 32 percent of the Republican delegates were women in 1976.[23]

The drop in the percentage of women at the 1976 Democratic convention led the Democratic Women's Caucus to attempt to obtain a guarantee of equal representation at the 1980 convention from the Democratic nominee Jimmy Carter. They received only the commitment that future conventions would "*promote* equal division between delegate men and delegate women from each state and territory" and that the "national party shall encourage and assist state parties to adopt provisions to achieve this goal."[24] In addition, the women received Carter's pledge to increase the number of women appointed to high political office.

In 1980, Democratic women achieved their goal of equal representation at the convention. At the urging of Carter operatives, the Democratic National Committee amended the convention "call" at its 1978 meeting to require "equal division" between the sexes. Feminists were also effective in getting their issues in the party platform. The 1980 Democratic platform contained planks denying party funds to candidates who opposed the ERA and supporting public funding of abortions for the poor, equal pay for women, improved child-care programs, and the boycott of states not ratifying ERA. Women were also able to mandate that all Democratic party bodies be composed equally of men and women.[25] The 1980 Republican feminist convention delegates faced formidable foes of both sexes. The Republican convention dropped its support for ratification of the ERA, called for a constitutional amendment banning abortions, and proposed that only federal judges who opposed abortion be appointed.[26]

THE FEMALE CANDIDATE

Candidacy for public office is an important threshold for the woman with a strong interest in politics. A woman who runs for office appears to have about the same chance of being elected as a man running for similar office. Getting women to seek public office is therefore critical.

Situational Barriers

It has been argued that women do not participate fully in politics because the realities of their personal lives make participation difficult. This position is supported in part by the number of women who delay running for office until their children are in school or have left home. The author's own research found that motherhood discourages women from running for office but that it has no effect on other kinds of political participation.[27] In the present cultural climate, success in politics may mean exposure to criticism as a poor wife and a worse mother, especially when a woman has young children. In her study of local party activists, Marcia Lee found that mothers cited the odd working hours and spur-of-the-moment activities required of officeholders as serious detriments.[28]

Political leaders also argue that it is a waste of time, effort, and money to promote a young woman for office when she is liable to become pregnant at any time. The fact that modern birth control techniques render the pregnancy of a serious candidate highly unlikely may serve to dispel this myth in time. In any event, the election of a young mother (Patricia Schroeder, D. Colo.) to the House of Representatives in 1972 and the birth of a daughter to another congresswoman (Yvonne Braithwaite Burke, D. Calif.) in 1973 may defuse this argument. However, it should be noted that Burke subsequently left Congress to be nearer her home and husband.

Another barrier faced by many women is their relationships with their husbands. In a study of Representatives Martha W. Griffiths (D. Mich.), Patsy Mink (D. Hawaii), and Margaret M. Heckler (R. Mass.) in 1968, Peggy Lamson found that each had an unusual degree of solidarity in her relationship with her husband, and each husband played a vital role in promoting and even managing his wife's campaign. In the present cultural context, few husbands are prepared or equipped to do this.[29] When Kansas Representative Martha Keys married Indiana Representative Andrew Jacobs, she found that her marriage and its potential implications for her district were major issues in her reelection campaign. Some voters questioned her legal residence and doubted that her loyalties and political independence would remain intact when she was married to a representative from another state. No such concerns were raised about Jacobs.[30]

Structural Barriers

Women are less likely to be found in the groups that traditionally have provided most political leaders. Susan Welch contends that "a substantial part of the underrepresentation of women in public office is due to their underrepresentation in the eligible pool: the business and professional occupations from which most officials are recruited."[31] Education and occupation combine to minimize women's potential recruitment for political office. As the educational and occupational barriers break down, we should witness an increase in the number of women officeholders. One significant area of progress is in the legal profession. In 1974, 19.6 percent of law school students were women; by 1981, the figure had risen to 35.3 percent. There had been an 80 percent increase in seven years.[32]

Electing Women

Voting results indicate that, when the party and incumbency situations are similar, women candidates are as likely to be elected as men. Robert Darcy and Sarah Schramm conclude that it is the political parties and their recruitment processes, not the voters, that determine how many women serve in elective office.[33] Unfortunately, party leaders may be more prejudiced than voters and rival candidates. Party leaders may sometimes encourage women to run in situations where they are likely to lose,[34] but a study of nearly 6,000 candidates in elections to the lower house, in six state legislatures from 1970 to 1980 found few female candidates who were "sacrificial lambs."[35] The study concluded that, once women were candidates, they were treated equally by party elites. Women in these legislative races fared as well as men in the primaries, and their higher loss rate in the general elections was not significant in light of incumbency and party strength in the district.[36] Certain demographic variables also seem to be positive forces in electing women. Women are more easily elected in cities with above-average incomes and educational levels and with a larger proportion of women college graduates.[37] Women candidates and some party leaders may not realize that women are electable, however, and thus women may be discouraged from seeking and attaining candidacy in the first place.[38] One positive note is the number of women who sought office in the 1982 election: 50 women ran for Congress and 1,620 for seats in state legislatures. The number of women vying for state legislative seats represented a 12 percent increase over 1980.[39]

WOMEN ORGANIZED FOR WOMEN

The unsuccessful effort for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment produced the gratifying effect of strengthening women's movement organizations. They became more mature in their political activities and learned the political lessons that only a ten-year struggle can teach.

Some feminists believe that feminist groups devoted too many of their resources to ratification of the ERA at the expense of other causes. The National Organization for Women (NOW) decided that most of its future emphasis would be centered on getting women elected to office.[40] NOW and the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) committed funds and energy to defeating legislators who had opposed the ERA. NOW raised more than $2 million for the 1982 political campaign and gave half of it to male candidates. Its leaders argued that support for women's issues was more important than the sex of the individual.[41] Margaret Heckler (R. Mass.), the woman with most seniority in Congress, was not supported because of her position on abortion. Millicent Fenwick (R. N.J.) was opposed in her efforts to gain a senate seat because she had supported President Reagan's economic policies. Both women lost to their NOW-backed male opponents. However, two of the five women who were elected to Congress also faced opponents supported by NOW.

The results of the efforts of women's groups were mixed. NOW claims it was successful in 66 of the 107 races in which it was involved. NWPC opted to focus on state elections on the premise that these provide training grounds for political novices and ultimately a pool of potential national leaders. Approximately 60 percent of the 1,620 women who ran for state legislature seats won. Three of the seven women running for lieutenant governor were elected, as were eleven of the sixteen female candidates for secretary of state and nine of the ten for state treasurer.[42]

WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE

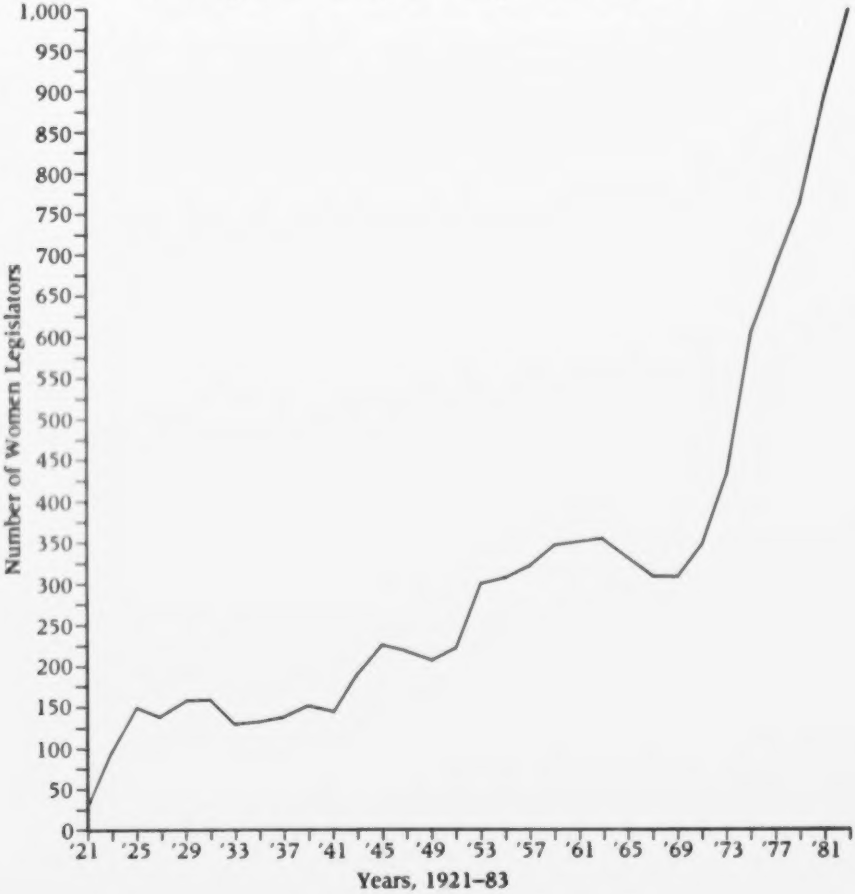
The number of women holding public office is incredibly low, in light of the fact that women comprise more than 51 percent of the population. In 1975 the percentage of offices held by women nationwide was 4 percent; by 1980 it had risen to 12 percent.[43]

State Offices

Women are making the biggest advances in state legislatures (see figure 1). In 1963 there were 351 women legislators (141 Democrats, 206 Republicans, 4 independents). The figure dropped back to 318 in 1967.[44] Before the 1972 election there were 344 women in state legislatures. As a result of that election, the figure went up to 424, an increase of 18.8 percent.[45] In 1974 the figure rose to 615, and in 1976 it reached 685, 9.1 percent of the total. By 1983 women had risen to 13.3 percent of state legislators (991 out of 7,435), an 8.9 percent increase over 1982.[46]

The largest women's delegations are in Connecticut and in New Hampshire. Emmy Werner attributes the success of women candidates in these smaller, nonurban states to the fact that campaigners have easy access to voters, the cost of campaigning in these areas is low, and the New England legislatures have small districts.[47] Pay and political payoff are often lowest in the positions where the highest percentages of women are found. In 1981 the New Hampshire legislature paid $200 per year; New York paid $30,804. There were 124 women in the New Hampshire legislature and 18 in New York.[48]

FIGURE 1 Number of women serving in state legislatures, 1921–83



Until 1974 only three women had been elected state governors, and all of them had come to office largely or entirely in their capacity as wives. Miriam A. ("Ma") Ferguson of Texas was elected in 1924 and 1932; her husband was the former governor and had been impeached. Nellie Taylor Ross was elected in 1925 to serve her dead husband's unexpired term in Wyoming. Lurleen B. Wallace was elected in Alabama in 1966, when her husband, George, was prohibited by the state constitution from succeeding himself in office. In 1974 Ella T. Grasso, a Democrat, was elected governor of Connecticut, the first woman governor to be chosen in her own right. Grasso had had a long political career in Connecticut, having served in the general assembly, as secretary of state, and in Congress. The second woman governor to be elected in her own right, Dixie Lee Ray of the state of Washington, had a very different political career. Her election as governor was her first entry into partisan politics. She had been on the faculty of the University of Washington until appointed chairperson of the Atomic Energy Commission and then assistant secretary of state for scientific affairs under Henry Kissinger. In 1983 Martha Collins was elected governor of Kentucky. Collins came up through the ranks of the Democratic party, serving as clerk of the state's old Court of Appeals before being elected lieutenant governor and then governor. These three backgrounds show that there is no one road to political success.

Congress

The first woman to be elected to the United States House of Representatives was Jeannette Rankin of Montana in 1916. Rankin was the only representative to vote against United States entry into both world wars. Throughout a long life she kept up her interest in public affairs. Although her last term in the House was in 1941–43, she led an antiwar march in Washington in 1968 at the age of eighty-seven. The first woman who actually served in the Senate was Hattie W. Caraway of Arkansas, who was appointed in 1932 to fill her dead husband's unexpired term. Later she won election to a six-year term.

Caraway's record is part of a pattern that characterized women in Congress before 1949: they entered via "widow's succession." Since then this pattern has broken down. Margaret Mead has pointed out that widows are the only women society allows to be both dominant and respectable at the same time. If power is thrust upon a woman by her husband's death, she may accept it without blame.[49]

In the Senate a woman is more likely to enter by appointment than by election, even when the vacancy is caused by something other than her husband's death. Of the thirteen women who served in the Senate between 1917 and 1980, seven were appointed to fill a vacancy. Of these vacancies, four were caused by the death or resignation of a nonrelative.

Table 7 (p. 416) shows the number of women members of the House and Senate from 1947 to 1984. There is certainly no very clear growth pattern. The total rose from eight in the 80th Congress to nineteen in the 87th, then dropped to eleven before rising again to twenty in the 95th, and peaking at twenty-four in the 98th Congress.

Since 1917, when Rankin was first seated, forty of the fifty states have sent women to Congress. Table 8 (p. 417) shows the record by state. Despite New

TABLE 7 Number of women members of Congress, 1947–84

Congress	Year	Women members	
		Senate	House
80th	1947–48	0	8
81st	1949–50	1	9
82nd	1951–52	1	10
83rd	1953–54	2	11
84th	1955–56	1	16
85th	1957–58	1	15
86th	1959–60	1	16
87th	1961–62	2	17
88th	1963–64	2	11
89th	1965–66	2	10
90th	1967–68	1	11
91st	1969–70	1	10
92nd	1971–72	1	12[a]
93rd	1973–74	0	16[b]
94th	1975–76	0	19[c]
95th	1977–78	2[d]	18
96th	1979–80	1	18
97th	1981–82	2	19
98th	1983–84	2	22

[a] Charlotte Reid left Congress to accept a presidential appointment.
[b] Two widows, Lindy Boggs and Cardiff Collins, were elected in special elections in 1973 to succeed their late husbands.
[c] Shirley Pettis was elected in a special election in 1975 to succeed her late husband.
[d] In 1978 Muriel Humphrey and Maryon Allen were appointed to the Senate to succeed their late husbands.

York's leading position with ten, the western states have sent more women relative to their populations. It is interesting to note that Vermont and New Hampshire, states with large numbers of women in their state legislatures, had no women in Congress in the entire sixty-seven-year period. In 1983–84 there were two women serving in the Senate, and this was the first time that two women had served simultaneously without either inheriting the office from a deceased spouse.

Women who served in earlier Congresses were likely to come from wealthy or politically prominent families. These characteristics may not offer the same political payoff they did in the past. Today, women from politically prestigious families, such as Senator Nancy Landon Kassenbaum, are the exception. More women serving in Congress now are lawyers, and more enter with prior elective experience. As Irwin Gertzog observed:

> In the past, women Representatives relied upon those attributes of their candidacies that were linked to ascribed characteristics—wealth, family affiliation, and social standing. More recent female House members, by contrast, have relied more upon discernible vocational and political achievements. . . . we have an effective political opportunity structure today that is accessible to a wider range of women than it was in the past.[50]

TABLE 8 States represented by women in Congress, 1917–83

State	Number of congresswomen
North Atlantic	
Maine	1
New Hampshire	0
Vermont	0
Massachusetts	3
Rhode Island	1
Connecticut	4
New York	10
New Jersey	5
Pennsylvania	3
	27
South Atlantic	
Delaware	0
Maryland	4
Virginia	0
West Virginia	1
North Carolina	1
South Carolina	3
Georgia	4
Florida	2
	15
South Central	
Kentucky	1
Tennessee	3
Alabama	3
Mississippi	0
Louisiana	2
Texas	1
Oklahoma	4
Arkansas	4
	18
North Central	
Ohio	3
Indiana	3
Illinois	9
Michigan	2
Wisconsin	0
Minnesota	2
Iowa	0
Missouri	1
North Dakota	0
South Dakota	2
Nebraska	3
Kansas	2
	27
Western	
Montana	1
Wyoming	0
Colorado	1
New Mexico	1
Arizona	1
Utah	1
Nevada	1
Idaho	1
Washington	2
Oregon	3
California	8
Hawaii	1
Alaska	0
	20

The modal age at which congresswomen begin their service is fifty. The author's survey of congresswomen from 1917 through 1978 indicated that over half of them were college graduates. Some 90 percent were wives or widows, and 39 percent had husbands who had also served in Congress. In terms of their occupations, 21 percent of the women in Congress had been teachers, and 16 percent had been lawyers. No other occupation was shared by as many as 10 percent. The prior political activity most often listed was service in a state house of representatives. In the 1982 elections no newly elected congresswomen were lawyers. This may be a function of the older age of congresswomen, who were educated at a time when law schools were less open to women.

It is well known that the secret of success in Congress is to acquire seniority. Freshman legislators are expected to serve inconspicuously, their only hope of wielding influence resting with winning reelection until they inevitably become committee chairs. Unfortunately, few of the women who have served in Congress have been reelected enough times to reach this level. From 1918 to 1983 only twenty-two congresswomen served five or more terms, the minimum length of time generally required to gain power in the House. The only woman senator to gain extensive seniority was Margaret Chase Smith of Maine. She was elected to the House of 1940 when her congressman husband was seriously ill with a heart attack, from which he later died.[51] She was elected to the Senate for the first time in 1949 and served until she was defeated in 1972. She was renowned for her service to her constituents, her independence of thought, and her record of never missing a roll call.

In Congress, women are not readily accepted in the informal organizations that can have considerable influence. These groups are used to plan strategy and occasionally to educate new members in the ways of the House. The male administrative aide to a congresswoman summed up the problem this way: "No woman can quite make it. The power structure doesn't operate that way. So much of the power structure is built around the golf course, the bar, over cards, in the gym shower room, etc. I doubt that the best or more able women can ever get to the inner circle where there is complete acceptance."[52]

No woman has ever been elected to any of the party leadership roles that are sources of considerable power—speaker of the house, majority leader, or party whip. Women who have shown competence and who have received recognition, such as appointments to choice committee posts, have tended to adopt role behavior like that ascribed to the general male stereotype.[53] Despite such successes, a woman is never accepted as fully as men in comparable positions. We must conclude, then, that the overall record is one of stagnation. A token degree of representation has occurred, but there has not been continuing progress.

THE POLITICAL WOMAN

From studies based on convention delegates, party activists, and officeholders, a profile of the political woman is beginning to emerge. Compared to women in the general population, political women have been found to be "more intelligent, more assertive, more venturesome, more imaginative and unconventional, and more liberal in their attitudes."[54] Comparing males to females, Edmond Constantini and Kenneth Craik found that political leaders of both sexes were "outgoing, socially skilled, and persistent." Relatively higher scores were recorded for females on self-control, but women conveyed this behavior in a less easygoing and less direct style of expression than their male peers. Women are also characterized as different from their male counterparts in their "tendency toward a serious and dutiful manner and in a fretful uncertainty about themselves and their situation, which is accompanied by a greater degree of anxiety and readiness for psychological change."[55] This analysis should not be surprising in light of the change in role and break from traditionally expected behavior that political activity demands of some women.

Jeane Kirkpatrick in a 1975 study found many psychological similarities between male and female legislators. Both had "strong egos, high self-esteem and a high sense of personal effectiveness and political efficacy."[56] In short, women political leaders have personality characteristics similar to those found in male politicos, such as feelings of competence and self-confidence.

Studies of women officeholders at all levels of government indicate that their backgrounds are similar to those of women in the general population.[57] Only among those seeking the highest offices do we find women whose parents showed unusually high interest in politics. Most have lived in their communities for a long time. They are somewhat older than the general population—a likely result of waiting until their children were older before running for public office. Like most political leaders they have higher educational and occupational status than the average person. In every office except United States representative and governor, women officeholders are as likely as men to be married and no more likely to be divorced, widowed, or single. They are more likely to be Democrats than Republicans.

THE FEMALE APPOINTEE

Women's progress in attaining high appointive posts and administrative jobs in government has been spotty. The record reveals areas of no progress at all, areas of retrogression, and areas of advances in spite of prejudice.

Only nine cabinet members have been women as of 1983: Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945; Oveta Culp Hobby, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare from 1953 to 1955; Carla Hills, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1975 to 1977; three Carter appointees, Secretary of Commerce Juanita M. Kreps, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Patricia Roberts Harris, and Secretary of Education Shirley M. Hufstedler; and three Reagan appointees, United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler, and Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole.

In 1981, there were 46 women among the 670 federal judges (6.9 percent).[58] Reagan broke with 191 years of tradition when he appointed Sandra Day O'Connor the first woman justice of the United States Supreme Court. This appointment lagged far behind public opinion. Gallup found that 86 percent of those surveyed approved of a woman's serving on the Supreme Court, and in no group—including self-labeled conservatives—did disapproval of O'Connor's appointment reach as high as 10 percent.[59]

Although Reagan's appointment of O'Connor received a favorable response from feminists, there is much chagrin that he has awarded only 10 judgeships (8.3 percent) to women, out of 121 judicial appointments. By contrast, of the 298 judges appointed by Carter through October 1980, 45 (15.1 percent) were women. As of June 1983, Reagan had made 980 appointments requiring Senate confirmations. Of these, 78 (8 percent) went to women.[60] The few women at the high levels complain that they are excluded from important decision making and that policy is determined by an "exclusive all male club."[61]

CONCLUSION

Our level of understanding of political women is still at the seminal stage. We are not certain whether women's political status is a product of socialization, motivation, or structural limitations. We suspect it is a product of all three forces, but we do not know the relative causal effect of each. We are not even sure that our attempts to understand female political behavior are not plagued by sexism and too much reliance on male models, male assumptions, and male expectations. We do know that there is no turning back. Women are beginning to experience the stirrings of political equality, and they like it. In the future they will demand more.

NOTES

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Note: The author would like to thank Carol Mueller for providing Figure 1 on page 414.

ELIZABETH McTAGGART ALMQUIST

Race and ethnicity in the lives of minority women

Ethnicity is a powerful force in the lives of American women, both minority and majority. It influences the values, attitudes, and sex-role orientations they develop. Ethnicity is almost as important as sex in determining the economic, political, and social opportunities women experience. Some observers have debated the relative importance of sex and ethnicity, especially in affecting the employment patterns and remuneration of minority women. This issue will be discussed later in this article. The main subject here is how sex and ethnicity interact in shaping the everyday lives of several groups of minority women.

The specific groups to be discussed are Native Americans, Blacks, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban-Americans, Japanese-Americans, Chinese-Americans, and Filipino-Americans. These groups are diverse, both internally and in comparison to each other. They vary enormously in their histories and current circumstances. Some are racially distinct from the White majority; others are distinguished more on the basis of language and culture. Some (Blacks and Native Americans) were here before the United States was formed, while others (Cubans) are recent arrivals. Some groups are regionally concentrated: Asians on the west coast and in Hawaii, Puerto Ricans in New York and the northeast, Mexican-Americans in the southwest. Other groups, especially Blacks and Native Americans, are scattered throughout the nation. Despite their diversity, all have shared the experience of exclusion and discrimination; none has been fully accepted into the mainstream of American life.

This selection omits several groups that are potentially of interest. Religious minorities, e.g., Jews and Mormons, are excluded primarily because the major source of data used here is the U.S. Census Bureau, which, by law, cannot collect information on religious affiliation.[1] The "white ethnics"—Poles, Italians, etc.—are not discussed mainly because they are not as distinct from the Anglo majority[2] in terms of race, culture, language, or life-style as the groups that are described. Several Asian groups—Cambodians, Laotians, Vietnamese—who are culturally

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and racially distinct are not discussed either; they are such recent arrivals that little information is available about them, either from the factfinders of the Census Bureau or from the social scientists attempting to understand and interpret their experiences.

The material that follows provides first a highly condensed historical introduction to each group and some discussion of its contemporary situation. Then the internal colonialism model is applied to illuminate the shared experiences of minority women. None of the information presented is as complete or as uniform as I would like, simply because social scientists have not paid much attention to minority women.

NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN

The history of Native American[3] women in this country may never be recovered, for several reasons. There were several hundred distinct Indian groups on this continent when Europeans began arriving as settlers. The native groups were so diverse that no one tribe was representative of the whole. The European invaders swept over the indigenous tribes, destroying many and permanently disrupting the traditional culture of most others. No native group had written records to document its life-ways prior to European contact. In addition, early anthropologists and ethnographers were males who ignored the lives of women in their reports.

We do know that many of the native groups practiced simple or advanced horticultural techniques; that is, most food was produced in small gardens tended by women. Some groups were matrilineal in descent and residence patterns. This meant that sons and daughters paid special attention to their female ancestors, property was handed down from one generation to the next through the female line, and women were surrounded by female kin on whom they could depend for support and assistance in routine work and in times of crisis. Men did exercise greater formal power than women, even in the most pronounced matrilineal groups, but their power was tempered by the informal power, resources, and respect that women held. For example, among the Iroquois, formal community power was vested in an all-male tribal council, but these representatives were selected with the advice and consent of the women leaders of the various clans.[4] Iroquois women worked collectively in the gardens, producing the bulk of the tribe's food supply, and the women controlled the distribution of their products. If the women disagreed with a male-instigated hunting expedition or war party, they could thwart it by simply electing not to provide the food for the trip. Among the Iroquois, like other matrilineal groups, women enjoyed rights and freedoms not held by women in more patriarchal tribes. Women could engage in sexual intercourse in much the same manner as men without being stigmatized for it, they were free to come and go as they wished, they could choose their own marital partners, and they could divorce a lazy or uncooperative husband by simply removing the man's personal possessions from the house and refusing to cook for him.

Life was much different in the fierce, warring, and nomadic tribes that have been highlighted (and greatly distorted) in popular fiction. The Apache and Sioux of the western great plains have often been depicted in movies. These groups were not nearly as crude or cruel as Hollywood represented them to be. Nonetheless women in these groups enjoyed very little freedom of movement. Their safety was threatened by enemies who delighted in taking captives. Women were frequently viewed as the personal property of men, fit only for doing menial work, raising children, and serving the sexual needs of men. Women could rarely choose their own husbands; instead, fathers "traded" their daughters to powerful men to form personal alliances. When she married, a woman left her natal household and entered the strange and often hostile household of her husband, where she did not have the support of female relatives. In such patriarchal tribes, women exercised few choices as individuals and held little power as a group.

The patriarchal Apache and Sioux stand in sharp contrast to the more peaceful and matrilineal Hopi, Choctaw, and Iroquois. In between were hundreds of other groups in which women had varying degrees of power, influence, and freedom. Some of the variations in women's power can be understood in the following analysis: where women played relatively important, direct roles in food production and controlled the distribution of the food, they held relatively high status; where men's hunting and warfare superseded women's role in prestige, then women were less powerful. Religious beliefs may also have influenced the relative status of women and men.[5] But, in most groups, women were not as underprivileged as they were among the European settlers.[6]

Regardless of the culture of a particular tribe, its life-ways were threatened as the United States government increasingly pursued policies of annihilation, forced removal from native lands, and confinement on reservations. The only buffers against the encroaching federal government were physical distance from the national power base and the settlers' perceptions that the land and resources the Indians possessed were undesirable. Thus, desert tribes in the far west were the last to be caught up in the whirlwind of war, defeat, and ultimate subordination. Some of the eastern tribes adapted to the intruding Europeans earlier and more peacefully. But, wherever the tribe resided, its encounters with the new nation threatened or destroyed its traditional means of gaining a livelihood. Because sex roles and family patterns are built around the major mode of subsistence, these too were increasingly disrupted.

John Price[7] argues that the dominant effect of the United States conquest has been the homogenization of tribal family patterns, with a corresponding trend to adopt aspects of Anglo life-styles. Whether matrilineal or patrilineal, traditional Indian families were ordinarily extended vertically, and often horizontally; marriage represented an arrangement between two families almost more than a union between two individuals; plural marriages were often permitted. All this has changed. Plural marriages were quickly outlawed. Only legal marriages were recognized, and divorce became a matter of formally dissolving a legal contract. Marriages became private relationships between two adults; relatives and friends could no longer intervene to chastise spouses who failed to meet their marital obligations. Government policy emphasized the husband–wife–children nuclear family and placed responsibility on the male to be the head of household. Indian children became educated increasingly in reservation schools run by Whites or in boarding schools in distant cities. This decreased the control parents had over their offspring. Some groups, such as the Hopi, were able to resist the White incursions by remaining isolated and resolute. But most groups became at least bicultural, giving up some traditional practices and participating partially in Anglo life-styles.

Even more dramatic than the reduction in the diversity of family practices was the homogenization of sex-role patterns. While women gained some status and security in formerly patriarchal groups, they lost some of the advantages they had held in matrilineal groups. The loss is illustrated by the Choctaw Indians of the east, among others. Choctaw women had worked cooperatively in the farm fields that provided the major means of sustenance and were handed down to succeeding generations through matrilineal descent rules. Christian missionaries were appalled by the sight of women engaged in agricultural work and distressed by Choctaw males' seeming indifference to providing for their families. In cooperation with the federal government, policies were introduced that made individual men (rather than families) property holders and commanded males to support their families economically.

Laila Hamamsy's study of the Navajo provides a corroborating example in the west.[8] She notes that Navajo women's economic position, family functions, sense of security, and bargaining power in the family have all been adversely affected by recent changes. The changes include government policies begun in the 1930s that parceled land out to male assignees only and limited the number of sheep that a family could own. Women had formerly controlled the sheep and woven blankets from the wool. Their major source of wealth was taken away. Women who now seek work in town are frowned upon, and they can choose only restaurant work, seasonal agricultural employment, or domestic service. Men leave the reservations as well, in hopes of securing better job opportunities. This tends to increase the divorce and desertion rates. Women's difficulties are compounded because they lose their traditional culture but do not perceive Anglo culture as worthy of emulation. Shirley Hill Witt suggests that the loss of meaningful roles for women is a factor promoting the high birth rate among the Navajo.[9] An additional factor is the traditionally high birth *and* death rates in agricultural economies such as these. Children are an economic asset; therefore, parents have several children to ensure that at least some will survive to adulthood. Native Americans may also resist government-instigated birth control programs on the grounds that these are racist and genocidal.

By contrast, Mountain Wolf Woman[10] (ca. 1885–1960) exemplifies the (sometimes dubious) gains women made from the loosening of patriarchal customs. She was a Winnebago woman of Wisconsin, whose life chronicled the major themes in the history of that group. Traditionally, Winnebago men practiced the glamorous roles of hunting, trapping, and fighting, while women specialized in the more mundane tasks of gathering plant foods, cooking, making clothing, and tending children. Mountain Wolf Woman was required, against her will, to marry her first husband. In her autobiography, she referred to him only as "that man" or "Pine's son." It is unclear how this marriage ended, but Mountain Wolf Woman was able to choose her two subsequent husbands, partly because she selected mates from outside her native group and partly because male kin no longer exercised much control over women. Both of these conditions were produced by Anglo conquest and settlement. The Winnebago people were forced to move around to seek employment, so that they came in contact with other tribes. Hunting lands were fenced off, and the supply of game became so depleted that Winnebago men lost their traditional economic roles. Later both men and women took up paid agricultural work, harvesting berries and picking fruit. These were tasks at which women excelled. Mountain Wolf Woman provided for her children and grandchildren by doing wage work of this type, making baskets and clothing, and gardening. Nancy Lurie, the editor of the autobiography, argues that Mountain Wolf Woman gained self-confidence, control over her own life, and skills in dealing with Whites that she would have otherwise missed.[11]

Today, Native American women juggle many responsibilities and have limited resources at their disposal. Nearly half of the Indian people reside in rural areas, on or near reservations, and they tend to have large families. Poverty and very high unemployment rates, caused by the absence of rural industry, contribute to giving Indians the lowest per capita income[12] of all the groups discussed here. Native American women have relatively low labor force participation rates, in part because of heavy family responsibilities and the lack of available jobs. These women contribute substantially to family subsistence, however, by raising gardens, tending sheep and cattle, and making clothes and household objects. Some are able to supplement their income by making and selling souvenir items. There has been a renaissance of ethnic pride in the last twenty years, and many women spend a great deal of time working on behalf of the Pan-Indian movement. This movement is oriented toward maximizing self-determination for Native Americans, which means dispensing with federal control over Indian affairs. In less polite terms, the movement aims to push the much-hated Bureau of Indian Affairs out of the picture. The movement is concerned not so much with achieving material gains as with educating Native American doctors, lawyers, and other professionals to handle Indian affairs. It is also concerned with maintaining or regaining traditional culture, including language, customs, dress, religion, and ceremonies. In some groups, women are explicitly responsible for being the "keepers of the culture,"[13] and this adds to their heavy set of duties.

Over half of the roughly one million Native Americans now reside in cities and towns. The movement to urban environments was accelerated by passage of the Relocation Act of 1952. This was an effort to draw Indians into the mainstream. Indeed, thousands of household heads did move, lured by the promise of training, jobs, housing, and medical assistance. Participants in relocation programs tend to be older, to be more poorly educated, and to have lower incomes than Indians who migrate to the city on their own.[14] Both groups often perceive the city as a cold and distant place. Indians socialize mainly with other Indians, avoiding contact with Whites who are antagonistic toward them. A large number return to their rural homes periodically to renew contacts with family and friends.

Native Americans who stay in the cities have many responsibilities as well. Shirley Fiske, following other anthropologists, suggests that Native American women are less prepared for life in the city than men.[15] Women more often grew up on the reservation, less often went away to boarding school, and did not have the military experience that men had.[16] Fiske goes one step further, arguing that Indian women in Los Angeles deliberately choose to remain *bicultural* in orientation. This means accepting enough Anglo culture to get a job, communicate with employers and teachers, establish residence and vote, and negotiate the labyrinths of urban federal bureaucracies. But it also means rejecting the materialistic values of Anglo culture and retaining an emphasis on native values, such as sharing material goods, being noncompetitive, avoiding manipulation of other people, and not criticizing them.[17] This communal orientation works well in establishing shared bonds with other Indians, and it helps ease the burdens and tensions of life in the often hostile White city. Thus, women get along by being politely formal toward Whites and reserving emotional responsiveness for relationships with family and friends. Most, but not all, Indian women are first-generation urban residents. They are making life choices now that will affect all future generations.

BLACK WOMEN

The first Africans in North America were not slaves; they were probably indentured servants with a status much like that of the European servants who agreed to work for a period of time in exchange for passage to the new land. Once here, the White servants were able to work off their debts, claim land, and become settlers alongside their former masters. The new land demanded all available hands, and for a time the early colonists tried to hire or enslave the Native American population. However, Indians disliked working for wages, and captives frequently were able to escape or were released by their comrades. Black Africans lacked the resources available to Native Americans, and the color bar prevented them from uniting with White settlers. As the southern plantation system developed, the status of Blacks steadily deteriorated. They were unable to resist enslavement.[18]

At first male slaves were preferred for work in the fields and in the skilled jobs demanded by an agricultural economy. However, the United States committed itself to ending the slave trade early in the nineteenth century. Thereafter, increasing numbers of women were imported to increase the slave population. The slave women performed multiple roles. They worked as both field hands and domestic servants; they were required to have children, sometimes through forced breeding; and they attempted to care for their families and children in the slave quarters after all their other work was finished. Slave women were sometimes given a few days off after childbirth to nurse their children, but this was not done in recognition of their needs for rest and recovery. Instead, the slave owner was protecting his or her capital investment in human chattel.[19]

While some Blacks were able to gain or retain freedom, the overwhelming majority were caught in a harsh and destructive system. The slaves who were imported came from diverse tribal groups in Africa. They could not retain their own culture[20] or language. It was against the law in many southern states to teach slaves to read and write. As slaves had few legal rights (they could not own property, marry whom they chose, or execute a will), it was difficult for them to adopt White culture either. Black women coped as best they could with few material resources. They lived in the constant knowledge that members of their families might be sold. Their coping strategies may well be the source of certain elements prevalent in Black culture even today. For instance, Black relatives, friends, and acquaintances seem more willing than Whites to informally adopt children whose mothers are experiencing financial or emotional distress. The mothers see informal adoption as a much better alternative than formal adoption, because they do not have to relinquish custody and the children are placed with people whom the mothers know and trust.[21] These arrangements are not so common among Anglos; the custom probably originated as a response to the uncertainties surrounding family life during slavery.

After slavery most Blacks went to work as wage laborers or as tenant farmers for their former slave masters. Women worked as domestic servants and in the fields, as they had done before the Civil War. The owner of the land had a vested interest in keeping all family members actively producing on the land as well as perpetually in debt to him or her. By being exceptionally thrifty and industrious, some Blacks were able to buy their own land, but even this group was forced to engage in some sharecropping to eke out a living.[22] It was not until World War I that large numbers of Blacks began to move to northern cities, lured by work in defense industries. The trend accelerated during World War II, when many were induced to come north by promises of jobs and housing. For women the change of venue meant little in the way of real employment gains. It was not until after World War II and after women had achieved a strong increase in educational levels that they were able to move out of domestic and service work and into professional and clerical occupations.[23] Black women, like other minority women, are still notably absent from managerial, skilled craft, and factory supervisory work. Apparently employers are especially unwilling to place women of color in positions where they would supervise or work alongside White men.

For many years the sex ratio (number of men per one hundred women) among Blacks in some areas (such as the south and east) has been very low.[24] There are some "natural" reasons for this. Black men moved out of the south more rapidly than women, they moved to western states, they suffered heavy casualty rates as front-line troops in various wars, and the health of Black men is poor, so that they die earlier than other groups. There are also "unnatural" reasons for the scarcity of Black men. Poverty and discrimination lead to unemployment and apathy, which in turn may lead to alcoholism, drug abuse, and crime—although, of course, the pattern is not always a straight linear relationship among these elements. Nonetheless, a higher proportion of Black than of White men are in prision or otherwise unable to fill breadwinner roles. To cope with male absence, Black women frequently form vertically extended households, with grandmothers, mothers, and children living together. This practice too may have originated shortly after slavery, or it may be an adaptive pattern that is continually necessitated by current economic conditions.

When we turn to the contemporary lives of Black women, we find at once too much and too little research. There has been too much concern with the so-called pathological Black family, i.e., family patterns that differ from the supposed norms of White families. In the past, the existence of female-headed households and the allegiance that Black children, especially sons, expressed toward their mothers and grandmothers were taken as evidence that Black culture was matriarchal and somehow diseased. These families were seen as incapable of correctly training sons to fill adult roles and as favoring daughters at the expense of sons. Fortunately this viewpoint has changed somewhat, as social scientists have begun to find that White boys express loyalty to their female kin, that single, working mothers can be effective parents, and that social class effects are much more pronounced than racial effects in families.

Nonetheless we still know very little about Black women's own viewpoints and desires. The issues are politically charged in the Black community and among Black scholars. Some women practice birth control and seek abortion rights; others denounce these activities as contributing to Black genocide. Some Blacks advocate increased education and better jobs for women, while others see these as threats to male self-esteem already undermined by racism. Furthermore, when women attempt to challenge sexism in the Black community, they are often chastised and told that such issues are unimportant. An outsider is likely to find a great deal of emotion-charged rhetoric, but very little description of the specific choices Black women make.

Because there is a desire to strengthen the Black family, Black women are urged to play strong, nurturing roles that place them more firmly in the household and less firmly in the world of work and community action. Thus a variety of cross-currents and conflicting pressures assault the Black woman. Linda J. M. LaRue has written forcefully about a number of these issues. She concludes that "the true liberation of Black people depends on their rejection of the inferiority of women, the rejection of competition as the only viable relationship between men, and their re-affirmation of respect for general human potential in whatever form, man, child, or woman, it is conceived."[25]

SPANISH-ORIGIN WOMEN

Four groups of Spanish-origin women are identified by the Census Bureau; I shall discuss only three—Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban-Americans. The fourth census group is "other," composed of United States residents born in Spain or South American countries; it is the smallest category and has received almost no attention from scholars.

Mexican-Americans are the largest and oldest Spanish-origin group. The majority (around 85 percent) of the several million Mexican-Americans live in five southwestern states—Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California; thus they reside primarily in the areas that Mexico ceded to the United States. Despite their residential proximity, Mexican-Americans are as diverse in generation and immigration status as Blacks are in social class and almost as varied as Native American tribes are in cultural heritage. A large but unknown number are the descendants of Spanish and Spanish–Indian ancestors and have resided in this area for many generations. A smaller and also unknown number are first-generation immigrants or illegal aliens from Mexico who cross the easily permeable boundary into the southwestern United States seeking jobs. Length of residence in this country has an important and positive impact on socioeconomic status and acculturation.

The Spanish conquistadores arrived in the New World largely without women. The first Mexicans were created by the union of Spanish men and Indian women. Sometimes the women were traded to the Spaniards; sometimes they were captured. In at least one incident, the native women were baptized as Catholics before they were systematically raped by the Spanish soldiers.[26]

The Spaniards looked down on the indigenous women, both because they were natives and because they were women. They treated them as sexual, domestic, and laboring servants. Only low-status Spanish men married native women. The indigenous men tended to emulate the Spaniards. Women were to be taken by conquest, treated as property, and used to bolster the men's status as property holders.

The Catholic church helped to institutionalize a very unequal relationship between husband and wife. The Spaniards had discovered that they could control Indian women servants and keep them laboring in the *encomienda*[27] system by socializing them in the *Marianisma* concept (veneration of the Virgin Mary). The Marianisma ideal destroyed women's rebelliousness and taught them to be silent, to endure pain and sorrow, and to think in fatalistic terms. Good women were identified as virgins, saintly mothers, and martyrs. To emulate Mary, women had to be submissive, altruistic, and self-denying. The only alternative was to follow in the footsteps of the self-serving temptress, Eve. These ideals were incorporated into the culture of the new nation of Mexico, and transplanted to the United States.

The dichotomy between woman as Mary and woman as Eve continues today in somewhat modified form. Real people do not fit in either category, but they are pressured to do so. Women worry about deviating from the Marianisma ideal, because even minor deviations cast the woman as the negative Eve. A good mother is one who unconditionally loves her children and places their needs before her own. "Women accept this definition of themselves because of some security that comes with the role, but this acceptance lends itself to a subtle, pernicious undermining of women's self-esteem."[28]

The Marianisma concept for women complements the *machismo* concept for men. In the popular image, a macho male is a virile person who conquers and exploits women sexually. But "*machismo* also consists of manliness in a broader sense than just sexual prowess. It includes the elements of courage, honor, and respect for others, as well as the notion of providing fully for one's family."[29] Machismo supports the pattern of male dominance. Together these cultural ideals promote large families among Mexican-Americans. Children are evidence of the husband's machismo, while the Marianisma ideal stresses that "bearing and rearing children are the woman's most important function, symbolizing her maturity."[30]

But the large families and distinct marital role structures of Mexican-Americans should not be attributed to cultural ideals alone. These family patterns also reflect the unique historical circumstances experienced by Mexican-Americans. Betty Garcia-Bahne offers another interpretation of the development of husband–wife roles.[31] This interpretation requires some understanding of Mexican-American history.

Under Spanish domination, the nation of Mexico had developed a complex culture that differed appreciably from the Anglo-Protestant culture of the United States. When Mexico ceded the Southwest Territory in 1848, a large Mexican population involuntarily became citizens of the United States. Anglos poured into this territory, displaced the dominant Spanish-Mexican landowners, and dominated large numbers of Mexican peasants. Mexicans were used for the back-breaking labor of raising cotton, building railroads, working the mines, and preparing the land for irrigated farming. The Mexicans who were now Americans became a semicolonized labor force that built the infrastructure of the developing capitalist economy in the southwest. The subordination of Mexican-Americans was virtually complete by the turn of the century.[32]

The need of the Mexican-Americans to survive under Anglo exploitation was a major determinant of family patterns. They could not rely on Anglo courts to provide justice or on Anglo capitalists to offer steady work with adequate pay. Mexican-Americans came to depend on other Mexican-Americans, especially members of their extended families, for support and assistance. The Mexican-American worker faced a competitive, exploitive, and authoritarian situation on the job. The male worker tended to reproduce this relationship in his family.[33] He had little reason to be certain that he could continue to fill the breadwinner role; the low wages that he did earn undermined his manliness. For these reasons he demanded extra obeisance and respect from his wife. Meanwhile, capitalism was devaluing the work traditionally done by women—housekeeping, child care, cooking—and this reinforced the view that women were unimportant.

Later events contributed to these developing family patterns. During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Mexico experienced severe economic and political instability. Nearly one-tenth of that nation's population migrated across the border (which Mexicans viewed as an artificial boundary) seeking work in the United States. Their coming was encouraged, as many hands were still needed in the developing area. The Anglo capitalists saw Mexican-Americans as one more group that could be pitted against other (usually Asian) minorities to ensure a steady supply of cheap labor. In the 1930s, when the United States was experiencing a severe depression, many Mexicans were deported.[34] Mexican-American citizens as well as Mexican nationals were gathered and unceremoniously deposited on the south side of the border. World War II saw the beginning of the *bracero* programs.[35] These programs were designed to bring Mexican nationals into the United States to work on truck farms, planting, tending, and harvesting a large variety of vegetables and fruits. Owners of the huge agribusinesses argued that the war had created a shortage of laborers. After the war, the owners lobbied to retain the *bracero* program on the ground that United States workers would not take the low-level jobs in the fields and canneries.

These developments suggest a number of things. Mexican-American workers and Mexican immigrants were a supply of cheap, exploitable labor in the southwest. Initially, many, but not all, Mexican-Americans worked as migrant laborers. Entire families worked in the fields, because the work was seasonal and the wages of all members were required to earn a living. Women and girls worked under the watchful eye of husbands and fathers, who made certain that the females did not violate traditional norms of behavior and were protected from unwelcome sexual advances. As industrialization occurred, Mexican-Americans were increasingly employed as factory operatives. Women especially were preferred for sewing jobs in garment factories.

This supply of laborers proved infinitely expandable. Lax enforcement of immigration policies, the *bracero* programs, and the practices of "coyotes" (people who smuggle Mexicans illegally into the United States) ensured that the Mexican-American population would be continuously resupplied. If an employee fell ill, asked for a raise, or simply annoyed the employer, he or she could easily be replaced by someone else. Thus, any one worker was perfectly expendable, and this feature made it extremely difficult for Mexican-Americans to organize labor unions or to move out of the lowest level jobs.

The Mexican-American population in this country was constantly replenished with Mexicans of rural origin, who brought a conservative orientation toward family and sex roles with them.[36] Thus, the trend of immigration, coupled with capitalist employment policies, has reinforced family patterns that originated under the influence of Spanish Catholicism.

Contrary trends have been occurring over the last several decades. The Mexican-American population has become increasingly urbanized and better educated. Nonmigratory work has given children a better chance to stay in school.[37] Unfortunately, Mexican-Americans have not been able to exchange their educational qualifications for jobs and salaries at the same level that Anglos have. This is particularly apparent among high school graduates, where the occupational prestige of Mexican-Americans lags far behind the majority group.[38]

For the last several decades, Mexican-Americans have also been increasingly active in a variety of social movements to enhance their political, educational, and economic opportunities. These activities have spawned an awareness of sexism and often served as the springboard for feminist movements. The Chicana feminist movement also has strong roots in the working-class and union movements. There are a growing number of local and regional associations that publish newsletters, encourage labor activities and strikes, work to secure better health care for all Chicanos,[39] and support women candidates for public office. Superficially many of these activities resemble those of Anglo feminists. Terry Mason points out, however, that the Chicana movement differs, in that it depicts at least some aspects of the traditional female role (being a mother and wife) in a positive light. Mason suggest that Chicanas dislike Anglo feminists because the Anglos appear to condemn all aspects of traditional femininity. Mason also points out that the Chicana movement does not portray an overriding opposition between women and men; men are not depicted as the enemy or blamed for the limitations placed on women.[40]

The Mexican-American population is quite diverse, with large segments highly acculturated to middle-class patterns and other segments relatively aloof from Anglo life-ways. In the face of this diversity, there is a strong need to stress Chicano unity to mobilize the population in pursuit of human rights goals. Many Mexican-Americans see themselves as a colonized population. Maxine Baca Zinn argues that the main strategy for achieving decolonization and for forming the

New La Raza is to use the family as the basic organizational unit of the movement.[41] In this "political familism," machismo is being redefined to mean active striving for the good of the Mexican-American people. All members of the family, young and old, male and female, are urged to contribute to the movement. Women are valued for their contributions to the family as well as for activities outside the home. Chicana feminism places little stress on liberation for women alone; it emphasizes instead the benefits that can be obtained for Chicanos as a group.

PUERTO RICAN WOMEN ON THE MAINLAND

Puerto Ricans have been citizens of the United States since 1917, a condition that facilitates frequent movement back and forth between the island and the mainland. Migration began during the 1930s, and continued in full force after World War II, so that, by 1970, 1.5 million Puerto Ricans—over one-third of the island's population—were living on the mainland. Puerto Rico is an island colony belonging to the United States. The island's economy is poorly developed.[42] Migrants who come to the mainland tend to be from rural areas and lack advanced education or concrete job skills applicable in an urban setting. Many who come are sojourners seeking jobs and money to take back home. Unfortunately, well over half choose to live in New York City, where the number of blue-collar manufacturing jobs is steadily decreasing.[43] Puerto Ricans who move to other cities in the urban northeast receive better jobs and pay than those in New York, but that city remains the major point of arrival and departure for the journey home.

Many factors contribute to the decision by Puerto Ricans to return to the island. Lack of English language skills makes it difficult to obtain jobs, housing, and assistance. Many Puerto Ricans are very dark-skinned and encounter the hostilities suffered by Blacks in the United States. The Puerto Rican community in New York is not as strong or cohesive as some ethnic communities have been.[44] It lacks business owners and powerful politicians who could materially aid newcomers. The *padrino* who can help out in time of need (and who expects extensive personal services in return) is missing. Puerto Rican values stress generosity, personalism, and spiritual rather than material matters. These values frequently conflict with the emphasis on efficiency and rationality of the Anglo-Protestant culture on the mainland.[45] In addition, friends and family, sometimes even young children, are back home on the island. Migrants know that they can return to people who care about them.

Women experience migration, transience, and discrimination in ways that are personally disruptive and make family life difficult. More women than men return to Puerto Rico. Some are women who have lost their jobs, older women whose children are grown, or women whose marriages have dissolved. As Lourdes Miranda King points out:

> It is not unusual to find women working in the United States whose children are cared for by grandmothers or other relatives in Puerto Rico, or to find wives and children living in Puerto Rico while their husbands find work in the mainland, or to find working wives in

Puerto Rico "pioneering the resettlement" of husband and children—different patterns yet with the same divisive effect on families. The woman is thrust into the role of sole supporter, creating the new immigrant woman and incidentally destroying the myth of the passive female.[46]

It is impossible to understand the lives of Puerto Rican women on the mainland without examining their lives on the island. Quite briefly, island culture is a mixture of Spanish, African, and Indian antecedents, resulting in a blend that is uniquely Puerto Rican. The culture emphasizes macho values for men, virginity and family honor for women. The female child faces many more restrictions in dress, conduct, movement, and language use than the male. A girl is not permitted to be openly aggressive and must channel her ambitions into narrowly defined areas—marriage, some schooling, and a limited range of jobs. These jobs include the helping professions—nursing and teaching—if she is well educated, the service positions and light manufacturing if she is not.[47] Marriages are not particularly equalitarian. Marya Muñoz Vásquez points out that men will do housework only if the windows are closed and curtains drawn. "If someone learned that the husband was helping his wife or catering to her wishes, he would be described as *sentado en el baul* (the implication is that his wife dominates him)."[48] Men strive to maintain a public image of being dominant and macho even if their personal values are at variance with the social norm. The emotional distance between husband and wife and the unbalanced power structure contribute to women's deep psychological investment in their children. Heavy involvement in the mothering role may then bring a woman into conflict with her husband, who believes that his wife should give top priority to his needs.

Puerto Ricans carry these expectations with them to the mainland, where they are frequently shattered. In Puerto Rico women almost always consult their husbands before they make commonplace decisions such as taking their children to the doctor or selecting the menu for dinner. In New York, women find themselves without husbands more often. Even if they have not been deserted, they need to act more independently in the complex urban structure. Women experience a greater stigma when they bear children out of wedlock. They find their American-reared children more boisterous, harder to control, and more detached.[49] On the mainland, women need to be employed. The stereotype is that women have an easier time finding work than men do. In fact, women's unemployment rates are higher than men's and women's employment status has declined more than men's because of the recent deterioration of the blue-collar economy in the northeast.[50] Nonetheless, belief in women's greater economic success persists, echoing the rhetoric that Black women encounter.

Puerto Rican women share some similarities with other minority groups. The pattern of moving back and forth between Puerto Rico and the mainland and of being first-generation urbanites resembles Native Americans' movement between the reservation and the city. The Spanish heritage and strict emphasis on traditional sex-role patterns is shared with Mexican- and Cuban-Americans. Economically, e.g., in *per capita* income, Puerto Ricans are slightly above Indians and Blacks and slightly below Mexican- and Cuban-Americans. Finally, Puerto

Ricans on the mainland are beginning to organize to demand the rights and services accorded other United States citizens. Women are active in this movement. While some think that men should take leadership roles and receive extra respect for doing so, other women are becoming sufficiently radicalized to begin to press for resolution of feminist issues as well.[51]

CUBAN WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

Except for Filipinos, Cuban women are the least studied of any of the groups discussed here, and the research that has been done on Cubans is much more oriented to male than female issues and characteristics.[52]

Cubans began arriving in the United States soon after the fall of the Batista government and Castro's rise to power. The first groups were people who had been prominent in the Batista regime, from well-educated, affluent families. Castro has pursued a policy of letting almost everyone who wishes to leave Cuba do so. More recent migrants have been less well educated.[53] Special programs were instituted to resettle Cuban refugees in parts of the country away from Miami, where most enter the United States. The programs solicited U.S. families to "adopt" Cuban families and give them assistance in finding jobs and housing. These programs have been all but abandoned now. While they were reasonably successful, a very large Cuban population remains in Florida. Hostilities have erupted between Anglos and Cubans, despite Miami's official policy of biculturalism. Future generations will have to ascertain how easily Cubans will blend into American society.

The early Cuban women immigrants were from high-status families. They had been well educated but were not oriented toward working for pay. The tradition of *vergenza* (female dignity and honor) prevailed in Cuba. Women from the middle and upper classes were expected to be bright and energetic but not to traffic too frequently in men's affairs of business and politics. These women were accustomed to having domestic servants to do housework and care for their children, but they themselves did not often work for pay.[54]

The transition to the United States was abrupt and disorganizing. Many wives came with their children to face an uncertain future in this country. The early immigrants believed that their stay here would be temporary and that they would soon return to Cuba. Later immigrants did not share this illusion, as they had no reason to expect the Castro government to fail. Regardless of their marital status, the era in which they immigrated, or their level of preparation, many Cuban women were thrust into the labor force. In 1970, the labor force participation rate of married Cuban women was exceeded only by that of Japanese-American women.[55]

In terms of occupational distribution, Cuban women in 1970 were the minority group least similar to Anglo women and most similar to their male counterparts, of all eight groups discussed here. This was because Cuban women were largely absent from the secretarial and clerical fields that employ so many Anglo women. Cuban women were extraordinarily heavily concentrated in factory operative and service jobs, as were their husbands and brothers.

Working may be a relatively permanent adaptation for Cuban women in the

United States, but both Alejandro Portes[56] and Myra Marx Ferree[57] emphasize that many Cubans work only to regain the socioeconomic status their families lost in moving to this country. Ferree found few differences between working and nonworking Cuban women in Florida. Working women were more interested in issues of pay and working hours, but they expected to continue to do most of the household work. Women's attitudes were determined more by the age at which they entered this country than by their labor force status. Women who came as children, or who were born here, were less likely to accept restrictions on women's roles than women who migrated as adults. The younger women looked forward to more equalitarian family roles than their mothers and grandmothers had experienced.

ASIAN-AMERICAN WOMEN

Chinese-, Japanese-, and Filipino-Americans came to the United States in three successive waves of immigration beginning in the nineteenth century.[58] In each case, the bulk of the immigrants were male sojourners intent on making a good deal of money and returning to their native lands. However, few prospered immediately in the mines, railroads, and canneries of the west coast, and some returned empty-handed. Each group of immigrants was initially welcomed to fill the tremendous need for laborers that attended the opening of the west coast to Anglo settlement. However, they came at about the same time as new waves of White migrants and competed with Whites for resources and jobs. Consequently, prejudices and stereotypes were formed, and sometimes open hostilities erupted.

Employers were not really concerned about the race or nativity of the people who worked in their factories and farms; they primarily wanted to hire adequately skilled labor at the cheapest possible price. Thus, the capitalist owners took advantage of conflicts between Anglos and various groups of immigrants by hiring the lowest bidders for jobs; whether they actively manipulated the level of intergroup hostility is unclear.[59] In any case, strong associations of White workers emerged that were opposed to Asian immigrants. Eventually the federal government passed a series of acts that severely limited the numbers of Asians coming into the United States. The Chinese Exclusion Acts and other immigration legislation affected the numbers of Asian women entering the country and the subsequent formation of families.

The Asian groups differ primarily in the timing of their arrival.[60] The Chinese men came first; there were slightly over 100,000 on the west coast in 1880. Their numbers dropped in the early decades of this century, as many either earned the money they wanted and returned home or left the country because of the harassment and intimidation they experienced. Japanese men came somewhat later; there were 111,000 in the United States by 1920. The Japanese were more likely to bring wives with them than the Chinese; nonetheless many, like the Chinese, sent back to their homeland for "picture brides." Filipinos immigrated during and after World War II; their numbers did not reach the 100,000 mark until 1960.

Because of the character of immigration legislation and the patterns of immigration, there has always been an unbalanced sex ratio among Asian groups.

The figures are startling. In California in 1920, there were 529 Chinese males and 171 Japanese males for every 100 females of their respective nationalities.[61] The absence of marriageable women created a need for services typically performed in families. A sizable segment of the population, especially among the Chinese, ran boardinghouses, laundries, and restaurants. Chinese women often worked as prostitutes.[62] The demand for their services was high among the single males who had no other form of sexual outlet. The wages of prostitutes, camp cooks, and laundresses were low, however, because the wages of the minority men were low.

Japanese women were able to come to the United States and establish families before the restrictive Immigration Act of 1924. Some of the Japanese were able to buy their own land and establish truck farms on the west coast. Japanese women worked side by side with their husbands in the fields throughout the long day and returned to the household at night to do all the housework. Men did not participate in housework and child care. Japanese women were expected to sacrifice their own well-being so that the family might gain a foothold in the new land. They were expected to defer to their husbands, even go hungry so that men could eat when food was scarce.[63] The more prosperous the Japanese became, the more resentment other groups directed toward them. Anti-Japanese sentiment climaxed during World War II, when people of Japanese ancestry were forced to move to relocation camps in the interior. After the war, there were very few new Japanese immigrants of either sex.

In contrast, Chinese women did not arrive in great numbers until after World War II, as the wives of returning servicemen, both Anglos and Chinese-Americans. The Chinese-American population increased dramatically, and the sex ratio changed from 74.1 percent male in 1940 to 53 percent male in 1970.[64] Among recent Filipino immigrants, increasing numbers are women, but Filipinos still have the largest excess of men.

Since 1952, immigration policies have given first preference to the children and spouses of people who are already citizens of the United States, second preference to highly skilled professionals, and third preference to workers in skilled or unskilled occupations for which laborers are needed.[65] This means that recent immigrants tend to be much more highly skilled and educated than earlier immigrants. Filipino women provide a pertinent example. Most migrated to the United States only after completing a rather extensive education in the Philippines and securing sponsorship from relatives or friends in the United States. Filipino women are very similar to Anglo women in their occupational distribution, with one notable exception: 30 percent of Filipino women but only 16 percent of Anglo women are professionals. Within the professions, Filipinos are more than twice as likely to be nurses and twelve times as likely to be physicians as Anglo women. Proportionately, there are four Filipino nurses for every Anglo nurse and twenty-four Filipino doctors for every Anglo doctor.[66] Specialization in medicine has given Filipino women an opportunity to come to this country and an avenue for assimilation as well.

There are strong differences between older and younger generations of Asian-Americans in occupational achievement.[67] Older Asian men are concentrated in the manual service work and laborer occupations, while younger Asians are more often found in the professions, notably medicine, science, and engineering. Age (or generational) differences are marked among Asian women as well, but Asian women are more similar to Anglo women in occupational distribution than Asian men are to Anglo men. Older Asian women are factory workers, often seamstresses, or they are in service work as waitresses, hairdressers, nurses' aides, and the like. Younger Asian women conform most closely to the Anglo model: very high proportions are secretarial and clerical workers. Like their Anglo counterparts, younger Asian women have become relatively well educated but they encounter artificial ceilings on their professional achievements and stop signs along the road to managerial posts.

Generational differences in education and jobs are accompanied by strong differences in values and life-styles. Japanese parents worry about their children remaining faithful to traditional religious beliefs and are especially concerned over the perceived high rate of out-marriage (usually with Anglos) among their daughters.[68] Older Asians hold traditional values for their children. Members of both sexes, but girls particularly, are supposed to be modest, unassuming, and strongly oriented toward family. This means that younger women who espouse feminist values, who place individual desires over family needs, or who merely pursue a chosen career actively are in danger of coming into conflict with their parents. There is little social support for the independent, self-achieving woman.

The traditional Chinese family had roles rigidly prescribed on the basis of sex and age. The father—"the terrible old one"—was a patriarch with supreme authority. Wives and daughters were expected to serve the male head of the family and produce male heirs. Education was not necessary for women's roles; in fact, it might endanger feminine virtues of modesty, inconspicuousness, patience, gentleness, and sensitivity to others. This stark picture of family roles was the ideal model in traditional China.[69] Young Chinese-American women are likely to have one or more foreign-born parents and therefore likely to experience conflict with them over proper demeanor, dress, regard for elders, dating relationships, mate selection, and career choice.[70] While Lucy Huang suggests that younger Chinese respond to their parents with resignation (and not rebellion),[71] other adaptations occur as well. Stanley Fong found that Chinese college women exhibit attitudes of which their parents would almost certainly disapprove.[72] He argues that the women compensate for their estrangement from traditional Chinese values by overstressing the female role options and by striving to be exceedingly feminine in appearance. These women face a primary conflict between the assertiveness and activism needed to succeed in a chosen career and the reserve and modesty demanded by Chinese culture.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE MINORITY FEMALE EXPERIENCE

This article has portrayed the unique features of life in the United States for each of the eight minority groups, but there are also many similarities among them. Several themes recur in the lives of all minority women that color their experiences.

Social science research emphasizes majority–minority relations in terms of prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, and exploitation. An equal stress is placed on poverty and success, assimilation and acculturation. These issues are important, as they establish the parameters in which women live out their lives, but they do not reach to the heart of the matters that concern women the most. They especially do not reveal the very active part that women play in adapting and helping their group adapt to the realities of racism in American life. Only in studies of ethnic families have women's roles begun to be examined, but even there women are frequently seen as passively accepting a patriarchal structure, not as innovators and achievers.

Social Science Perspectives: The Internal Colonialism Model

Among the several possible social science perspectives that one might use to shed light on the experience of the minority woman, only one stands out as being at all useful. This is the perspective of internal colonialism. The term *internal colonialism* recognizes an explicit parallel between the European nations' treatment of Asian and African groups whom they conquered in their original countries and Americans' treatment of minority groups in this country. Several authors have suggested that a combination of formal and informal actions in the United States constitutes a policy of internal colonialism applied particularly harshly to racial minorities and not to European immigrants. Robert Blauner has most forcefully argued that certain minorities, primarily Blacks, Mexican-Americans, and Chinese-Americans, were especially treated as internal colonies to be exploited.[73]

According to Blauner, there are five principal processes by which minorities are subjected to colonial treatment. First, minorities enter the country's society and economy involuntarily. This is certainly characteristic of Blacks, who were captured and sold into slavery; of Indians, who tried unsuccessfully to avoid White encroachments on their territory; and of many Mexican-Americans, who became United States citizens against their will. Involuntary entry is less characteristic of the more recent arrivals (Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Filipinos), but often these groups perceive little choice other than coming to the United States. And many Chinese and Japanese citizens were initially lured to this country by false promises in work contracts that were unenforceable in the new land.

The second and third elements in internal colonization are destruction of the minority groups' native culture and the substitution of white-dominated bureaucracies to control the new group. Nowhere are these twin processes more apparent than among Native Americans. The United States formed around this population, engulfing those who were not murdered by the European invaders or killed by their diseases. The remaining groups were moved off their native lands and condemned to life on reservations. Until recently children were not allowed to speak their native language at school, under the guise of helping them to assimilate into the dominant culture. Very young children were frequently required to attend boarding schools many miles from their homes. This disruptive experience has had a continual impact on contemporary adults. Young mothers who had to go away to school are less able than other women to enjoy a close, relaxed, and adaptive relationship with their children.[74] On the reservations as well, the White-dominated Bureau of Indian Affairs took control of tribal decisions and resources, leaving Native Americans with little control and self-determination.

Most other racial minorities have been subjected to these same elements to a greater or lesser degree. Our history is replete with legal restrictions placed on minorities. The whole complex of Jim Crow laws, which prevented Blacks from voting, using public accommodations, and mingling socially with Whites, was one example; another was the laws in most western states that forbade Filipinos from marrying Caucasians. Similarly, several states had laws prohibiting the admission of Orientals to colleges and excluding the Japanese from purchasing land. In New Mexico, Anglos forceably captured ranches that had been held by Mexicans for decades; when the displaced owners tried to pursue their rightful claims in court, they consistently failed. In these and countless other ways, members of the dominant culture subjected minorities to controls and restrictions from which they themselves were exempt.

Racism, the fourth element in Blauner's model of internal colonialism, may have been the motive for destroying native culture and relegating minorities to a subordinate existence. But it was racism combined with the desire to get something from the exploited groups. In the case of Indians and Mexicans, it is clear that these groups possessed land that Whites wanted for themselves. Racism, with its accompanying negative sterotypes, was used to justify the actions of the dominant group. But what about other groups who came here as immigrants? What resources did they have that were desired by the Anglos?

The answer is quite simple. The minorities supplied labor to do the dirty and disagreeable jobs that Anglos did not want to do. Black slaves could do the grueling field labor, Mexicans could work in the mines and lay out the irrigated farming systems, Chinese could build the transcontinental railroads. All groups could be used in the west to work in truck farming—in the fields and in the canneries—and be pitted against one another so that the employers could merely select the group that offered to work for the lowest wages. The needs of an expanding capitalist economy encouragd recruitment of minorities into the most back-breaking jobs with the lowest pay and least security, while racism justified the result—a dual labor market.

The dual labor market is the fifth element in internal colonialism. A dual or split labor market is a system in which the labor force is divided into two or more groups on the basis of ethnicity or race, and one group is systematically kept subordinate to the other. According to Blauner, the most significant aspect of this system was the confinement of minorities to jobs developing the "agricultural base and the mineral–transport–communications infrastructure for industrialization and modernization."[75] After development had occurred, minorities were systematically excluded from working in the industrial–durable manufacturing–managerial jobs that had been created by their labor. Minority groups had to seek lower status and more poorly paid jobs in service work, manufacturing of nondurable goods, and, occasionally, the low-level professions. This early subjugation continues today in the lower socioeconomic status of minorities—how much lower is in direct proportion to the extent of their colonization.

Impact of Internal Colonialism on Women

Almost no one has sought to trace the impact of this subjugation on women. However, the effects on women seem to be precisely those that were identified earlier in the discussions of individual minority groups. Each of these will be highlighted briefly.

Rural origins. Initially most of the minority group members were concentrated in rural rather than urban areas. All groups have become much more urbanized in recent years, but at a slower rate than Anglos. Residing in rural areas has meant that women lacked access to modern transportation, health care, contraceptive information, mass media, and education. Each of these would contribute to women's ability to throw off the shackles of traditional sex-role stereotypes. These are resources that help women move toward free choice and self-determination.

Ghettoization. At whatever time a minority group moved into the cities, the group inevitably became residentially segregated. The Black ghetto, the Spanish *barrio,* Chinatown, Little Havana—all represent the unwillingness of Anglos to allow minorities to live in their midst. Confinement to ghettos meant that urban women were nearly as isolated from the resources mentioned above as their rural sisters. While many women went out of the ghetto to work, many did not. Regardless, the ghettoized women had less contact with the world outside, resulting in fewer opportunities for emancipation and personal development.

Strong attachment to family and ethnic values. For many groups, ghettoization went hand in hand with emphasis on traditional ethnic values. The concentration of many people with roughly similar ethnic backgrounds in close quarters meant that the "saved" traditional culture (cultural elements not destroyed by the colonizers) could be readily upheld. All groups struggled to protect and enhance their way of life. All groups were patriarchal to a greater or lesser degree. Often this was one of the few cultural elements that they could readily save.

Defensive strengthening of the family. Colonized groups are forced to rely on their families for maintenance, support, and protection. The need for a strong family often translated into a need for a strong mother. Women struggled to conserve precious resources, to make food, clothing, and money stretch as far as possible. They worked to make the home a safe haven, a place of respite from the rigors of a racist society. Whether males encountered authoritarian domination in their roles outside the family and converted their frustration into authoritarian domination over their families, as Garcia-Bahne has argued in the case of Mexican-American families, is debatable.[76] Nonetheless, all these elements contributed to making women subordinate. Women were encouraged to sacrifice self-interest for the good of the family. This theme echoes among ethnic groups today. Many minority group members hold the view that the ethnic minority cannot be strong unless the ethnic family is strong, and women should assume the primary responsibility for making it so.

Poverty and affluence. Unrelenting poverty was the experience shared by most minorities in their early years in this country. Some groups have moved out of poverty more rapidly than others. Generally, the Asian groups are highest, the Hispanic groups are intermediate, and Blacks and Native Americans are lowest in such conventional measures of socioeconomic status as family income, per capita income, educational attainment, and steady employment. As indicated above, the degree of affluence today is inversely proportional to the degree of colonial subordination that a group has experienced. The long, slow climb out of poverty has been facilitated by female work, thrift, and sacrifice.

The necessity to work. Colonial domination and subsequent poverty created the need for minority women to be employed. Sometimes the work was done for pay; in other cases women were recompensed in food and clothing. Many women worked as unpaid agricultural laborers on family farms or in family-owned stores, restaurants, and laundries. This was especially true for Japanese and Chinese women. Today, a major factor in the high family (not individual) income of these groups is the employment of several wage earners.

Other minority women did not have family-owned enterprises in which to work. Black women worked as domestic servants, Mexican-Americans as field hands, and Native Americans were rarely able to get jobs at all in the early years of their colonization. The only group for whom we have reliable historical figures is Black women. Their rates of labor force participation (LFP) have always been higher than those of whites, but today the LFP rates are converging (see table 1).

Blacks constitute the largest minority group; their numbers are larger than all the other minorities combined. It is understandable, then, that social scientists have tended to view Blacks as *the* typical minority. However, the only comparative analysis of LFP rates shows that Blacks as a group do not fit the patterns observed among the other seven groups. Among those minorities, four characteristics predicted high levels of female employment: high levels of education, opportunities for some higher status jobs for women, husbands with high incomes, and families with few children. Black women do not have these characteristics, yet their rates of employment are typically quite high.[77]

Table 1 presents the most recent data available on women's labor force participation. Note that the LFP rates for the total are not very meaningful, because women are distributed differently across the marital status categories and the LFP rates for each category differ appreciably. To avoid confusion, let me focus briefly on married women whose husbands are present. This discussion also relies on 1970 and 1976 data to highlight employment among groups not included in table 1.

The combining of the three Hispanic groups in table 1 obscures marked differences among them. Mexican-Americans constitute the largest Hispanic group. Their LFP rates have been historically low because they have lacked education, employment opportunities, and freedom from cultural restraints on women's employment. Puerto Ricans also have low LFP rates for many of the

TABLE 1 Labor force status of women by marital status, presence and age group of children, race, and Hispanic origin, March 1983 (numbers in thousands)

Marital status and presence and age group of children	Civilian labor force participation rate			
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic origin
Total	52.3	52.0	54.0	47.7
No own children under 18 years old	48.7	48.7	47.6	48.1
With own children under 18 years old	58.9	58.3	62.5	47.2
Children 6 to 17 years old, none younger	66.3	66.0	68.1	56.0
Children under 6 years old	50.5	49.1	57.0	40.0
Children under 3 years old	46.0	44.9	50.9	37.4
Never married	62.6	65.3	52.0	52.7
No own children under 18 years old	64.1	66.1	52.4	55.8
With own children under 18 years old	49.8	46.8	51.2	35.0
Children 6 to 17 years old, none younger	68.1	71.6	67.1	([a])
Children under 6 years old	42.5	38.6	44.4	25.3
Children under 3 years old	37.9	36.6	38.3	23.2
Married, husband present	51.8	51.0	60.8	46.9
No own children under 18 years old	46.6	46.2	51.5	47.2
With own children under 18 years old	57.2	56.2	68.5	46.8
Children 6 to 17 years old, none younger	63.8	63.4	69.1	53.5
Children under 6 years old	49.9	48.2	67.8	41.9
Children under 3 years old	46.0	44.4	62.5	38.6
Married, husband absent	58.7	58.5	58.9	37.7
No own children under 18 years old	55.6	56.4	52.9	32.9
With own children under 18 years old	61.5	60.5	63.2	40.5
Children 6 to 17 years old, none younger	68.7	68.0	70.5	46.8
Children under 6 years old	53.8	53.1	54.0	34.7
Children under 3 years old	53.0	52.4	53.4	([a])
Widowed	19.8	19.2	23.8	24.6
No own children under 18 years old	17.9	17.4	21.8	19.5
With own children under 18 years old	54.5	58.5	40.0	([a])
Children 6 to 17 years old, none younger	54.8	60.0	36.0	([a])
Children under 6 years old	52.4	([a])	([a])	([a])
Children under 3 years old	([a])	([a])	([a])	([a])
Divorced	74.6	75.2	71.0	66.2
No own children under 18 years old	71.7	72.1	68.6	63.8
With own children under 18 years old	78.3	79.5	73.2	68.2
Children 6 to 17 years old, none younger	82.2	84.1	73.9	74.9
Children under 6 years old	68.7	68.3	71.5	([a])
Children under 3 years old	59.9	60.6	([a])	([a])

Source: "Marital and Family Characteristics of Workers, March 1983," unpublished data released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics, September 1983.

Note: Children are defined as "own" children of the family. Included are never-married daughters, sons, stepchildren, and adopted children. Excluded are other related children such as grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and cousins, and unrelated children.

[a] Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

same reasons. Cuban women, however, have higher LFP rates than any other group except the Japanese. In husband–wife families, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino women have higher rates than Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, or Native Americans.

In the past two decades, the overall LFP rates of Hispanic and White women have been increasing dramatically, while Black women's LFP rates have not increased as much. This general convergence masks pronounced differences between Black and other women in patterns of who works. Among Whites and Hispanics, the highest LFP rates are for divorced and never-married women. This same pattern was true among Asian women in 1970 and 1976. But among Blacks the highest rates are for married women with children. Thus Blacks are again atypical. Proportionately, many more Blacks than other women are trying to juggle triple roles as wives, mothers, and workers.

Colony within a Colony: Occupations of Minority Women

The United States, like other capitalist countries, has used women as a reserve supply of labor, available to work when needed and dismissable when not needed. Minorities have played a somewhat similar role. Consider then the dual exploitation experienced by minority women.

Table 2 provides information about the occupational distribution of the sexes, yet it conceals almost as much as it reveals. Each major occupational category is made up of many specific jobs that vary a great deal in prestige. Women and men are distributed differently across the specific jobs within several of the categories. Among professional and technical workers, men are more likely to be doctors, lawyers, or accountants, while women are teachers, nurses, and dental hygienists. Within the sales category, males more often handle wholesale goods, large property exchanges, and, in retail sales, durable goods for which commissions are received. Women are more frequently dime store, grocery store, and department store clerks. Among service workers, men are more often employed in protective services, as firefighters and police officers, while women are in the less lucrative food, personal, health, and cleaning services. In these three major occupational categories, women are in the lower status positions. Ethnicity plays a part as well: a minority woman has a greater probability of being in a lower position within any of the major occupational categories.

Other disparities between men and women as well as between Whites and minorities are more apparent in table 2. Whites and males are more likely to be managers, administrators, and skilled craft workers. Minorities and women are more likely to be service, clerical, and secretarial workers. White women have been heavily concentrated in clerical work for a long time. Minority women have only recently moved into the clerical ghetto.

It is not easy to disentangle the effects of minority status and sexual status on the occupations of minority women. However, several points are salient. First, Asian women have occupational distributions similar to Anglo women, while Native American job patterns resemble those of Blacks and Hispanics. Second, education is an important determinant of jobs. Minority status is more important than sexual status in determining the *amount* of education minority women

TABLE 2 Occupational distribution of employed white, black, and Hispanic-origin women and men, 1982

Occupational group	Percentage of women	Percentage of men
White (37,615,000 women; 50,287,000 men)		
Professional-technical workers	18.0	17.0
Managerial-administrative, except farm, workers	8.0	15.6
Salespeople	7.4	6.8
Clerical workers	35.1	6.1
Craft workers	2.1	20.8
Operatives, excluding transport workers	8.2	9.5
Transport workers	0.7	5.2
Nonfarm laborers	6.5	1.2
Private household workers	1.9	([a])
All other service workers	16.3	8.3
Farmworkers	1.2	4.1
Black and other (5,641,000 women; 5,983,000 men)		
Professional-technical workers	15.7	12.7
Managerial-administrative, except farm, workers	3.9	7.4
Salespeople	3.3	2.9
Clerical workers	29.7	8.4
Craft workers	1.5	15.9
Operatives, excluding transport workers	13.5	13.5
Transport workers	0.7	7.6
Nonfarm laborers	1.5	11.8
Private household workers	5.4	0.2
All other service workers	24.4	16.9
Farmworkers	0.6	2.7
Hispanic-origin (2,047,000 women; 3,111,000 men)		
Professional-technical workers	9.5	7.9
Managerial-administrative, except farm, workers	4.9	7.9
Salespeople	5.1	3.7
Clerical workers	32.8	6.9
Craft workers	2.4	20.3
Operatives, excluding transport workers	19.6	17.4
Transport workers	0.05	6.7
Nonfarm laborers	1.5	11.0
Private household workers	4.0	0.01
All other service workers	18.1	13.2
Farmworkers	1.6	4.9

Source: For whites and blacks and others, *Employment and Earnings* (January 1983), vol. 30, no. 1, table 22, p. 157. For Hispanic-origin, unpublished data from the 1982 annual averages made available by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Note: Data are for persons 16 years of age and over.

[a] Less than 1 percent.

receive; that is, because of their lower socioeconomic status, members of ethnic groups receive less education than Whites. But sexual status is more important than minority status in determining the *type* of education minority women receive. Particularly among college students, women are less likely than men to prepare for scientific, technical, and professional careers. Third, when workers enter the labor market, the influence of their sexual status is very strong. Minority women resemble White women in the types of jobs they are socialized to choose and in the jobs for which they are sought and hired. An examination of the distribution of all groups across the (roughly) 300 specific occupations that comprise the paid labor force reveals that minority women are much more similar to Anglo women than they are to minority men.[78] The net impact of being a woman is stronger than the net impact of being a minority group member.

Another question concerning the jobs that women hold is: Are there any ways in which minority women are different from both Anglo women and minority men? I would speculate that the answer is yes. The internal colonialism model emphasizes how minority males were sought to fill specialized occupational niches. The range of these specialties was quite broad, but they were generally low-status, preindustrial posts. Minority women were perhaps not sought for specific kinds of work, but once available they were used for certain types of jobs. Historical examples include Black women in domestic service, Chinese women in restaurants and boardinghouses, Mexican-American women in field work and canneries, and minority women from several groups in garment making. Much more intensive research is needed to uncover the specific niches minority women were used to fill and the lingering influence that experience has had on contemporary achievements. At present, minority women are moving out of their traditional patterns and merging with White women in the labor force.

Earnings: Where Dual Minority Status Really Hurts

Many women genuinely choose to be employed; others must work to support themselves and their families. Regardless of their motivations for employment, nearly all are concerned about bringing home a fair paycheck.

Table 3 displays data on earnings. The earnings of any group are affected by a variety of factors. In rough descending order of importance these include: occupation, education, weeks and hours worked, job tenure, career continuity (years of experience in the same or a closely related job), region of the country, union membership, and other factors. Several factors are closely associated with being a woman, notably occupation, job tenure, weeks and hours worked, and career continuity. Fewer—only education and region—are directly connected with being a member of a minority group. When these figures and other, much more complex data are analyzed in detail,[79] it seems clear that minority women have small paychecks more because they are women than because they are minorities. Two matters are paramount. First, the occupational pattern of minority women is the strongest predictor of their wages, and in this respect they resemble Anglo women. Second, to the extent that discrimination can be measured, explicit

TABLE 3 Median annual earnings of year-round full-time workers by sex and ethnic group, 1981

	White		Black		Hispanic-origin	
Earnings	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Annual earnings	$12,108	$20,706	$11,199	$14,727	$10,729	$14,720
Minority earnings as a percentage of white earnings			92.5%	71.7%	88.6%	71.7%
Women's earnings as a percentage of white men's earnings	58.5%		54.1%		51.8%	
Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings in same group	58.5%		76.0%		72.9%	

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States, 1981,* Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 137 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), table 55.

Note: Data pertain to workers 15 years of age and over.

discrimination (e.g., unequal pay for equal work) also is based more on sex than on ethnicity.[80] Discrimination takes a variety of forms and occurs at many points in the work process. Future research may generate a clearer understanding of discrimination, and, what is more important, detect ways to eradicate it.

One way to visualize the pervasive impact of sex on minority women's earnings is to observe their earnings as a percentage of the earnings of each of the other groups. As table 3 shows, minority women, especially Blacks, earn almost as much as White women do. Their earnings as a percentage of minority men's earnings is smaller. (Note also that minority males earn more than White females do.) Finally, White women earn 58.5 percent, Black women earn only 54.1 percent, and Hispanic women only 51.8 percent as much as White men do, *among year-round full-time workers*. Women from all groups are at the bottom of the salary heap.

CONCLUSION: THE LINK BETWEEN RACE AND SEX

Minority women are not inclined to map out a general view about whether sex or race is more disadvantageous to them. In specific instances they may say, "This happened to me because I'm a woman," or "This discrimination was based on race." But in most cases it is not possible to distinguish an incident as wholly racial or wholly sexual. Minority women are not minorities first and women second. Nor are they women first and minorities second. They are individuals who have incorporated a whole constellation of roles, characteristics, and experiences into their self-concepts. Yet sex and race are master statuses, channeling them into certain roles and impinging on their lives at every turn. Similarly, sexism and racism are strong forces in American society, penetrating all arenas, both public and private.

While minority women have been feminist activists, their activities and viewpoints are affected by a deep concern for the well-being of their own ethnic group. Women have been exceptionally active in all types of minority group movements as well. For many, their treatment as second-class citizens in minority movements crystallized their awareness of sexism, galvanizing them into action on that front. Yet the experience of racism makes them reluctant to form enduring links with White feminist groups, and the experience of sexism often puts them at loggerheads with minority males. Thus gender and minority status intertwine, weaving patterns that both unite minority women with and separate them from other groups. This unique, dual status of minority women places them in a special vantage point for understanding the effects of both sexism and racism.

Many people from all groups have worked to correct specific abuses and to lay out strategies for overcoming racism and sexism. These actions tend to be short-term and focused on one or the other, not both. Sexism and racism are related; one will not be eradicated unless the other is rooted out as well. A thorough restructuring of American society is needed to accomplish that task. Perhaps minority women will be in the forefront of the revolutionary army of liberation.

NOTES

1. Ordinarily, detailed data from the 1980 census on the eight groups described here would be available by this time. However, the Republican-dominated Congress has severely curtailed Census Bureau funding. Only limited information on Whites, Blacks, and Hispanic-origin groups has been prepared at the time of this writing. Therefore in certain instances, especially when discussing Asian-Americans, we have to use data from the 1970 decennial census and the 1976 Current Population Survey.
2. The term *Anglo* is widely used in the southwest to distinguish Whites and Mexican-Americans, who vary in skin color from very light to rather dark. In this article, the terms *White, Anglo, majority,* and *dominant group* are used synonymously. They refer to the great bulk of U.S. citizens who, despite their specific ethnic backgrounds, participate in and are the products of the mainstream culture.
3. *Native American* is also a term that may be unfamiliar to some readers. Native Americans prefer to be called by their tribal names—Zuni, Hopi, Pueblo, etc., but recognize that this is an improbable occurrence. Therefore they opt for *Native Americans* as a label. Few really want to be called *Indians* because that is indeed a misnomer.
4. Judith K. Brown, "Economic Organization and the Position of Women among the Iroquois," *Ethnohistory,* 17 (1970), pp. 151–63. See also Peggy R. Sanday, "Towards a Theory of the Status of Women," *American Anthropologist,* 75 (1973), pp. 1682–700.
5. This is a straightforward extension of Peggy Sanday's analysis of several hundred preliterate groups worldwide. Her analysis is much more complex and deserves more attention than can be given to it here. See Peggy R. Sanday, *Female Power and Male Dominance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
6. Shirley Hill Witt, "Native Women Today: Sexism and the Indian Woman," in Sue Cox, ed., *Female Psychology: The Emerging Self* (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1976), pp. 249–59.
7. John Price, "North American Indian Families," in Charles H. Mindel and Robert W. Habenstein, eds., *Ethnic Families in America* (New York: Elsevier North-Holland, 1976), pp. 248–70.
8. Laila Skeekry Hamamsy, "The Role of Women in a Changing Navajo Society," *American Anthropologist,* 59 (Feb. 1957), pp. 101–11.
9. Witt, "Native Women Today."
10. Nancy Oestreich Lurie, ed., *Mountain Wolf Woman: The Autobiography of a Winnebago Indian* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1961).
11. Somewhat parallel themes run through the life of Chona, who lived in the Arizona desert. See Ruth M. Underhill, *Papago Woman* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1979).
12. This conclusion is drawn from 1970 census data described in more detail in Elizabeth McTaggart Almquist, *Minorities, Gender and Work* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Co., 1979), pp. 35–36.
13. Wynne Hanson, "The Urban Indian Woman and Her Family," *Social Casework,* 61 (1980), pp. 476–83.
14. Joan Ablon, "Relocated American Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area: Social Interaction and Indian Identity," in Howard M. Bahr, Bruce A. Chadwick, and Robert C. Day, eds., *Native Americans Today: Sociological Perspectives* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 412–27.
15. Shirley Fiske, "Rules of Address: Navajo Women in Los Angeles," *Journal of Anthropological Research,* 34 (1978), pp. 72–91.
16. J. Weibel, "The American Indian Family in Los Angeles" (Paper presented at the Association of American Geographers, New York, April 1976), cited in Fiske, "Rules of Address." See also James Downs, "The Cowboy and the Lady: Models as a Determi-

nant of the Rate of Acculturation among the Pinon Navajo," in Bahr, Chadwick, and Day, eds., *Native Americans Today*, pp. 275–91.

17. Rosalie Wax and Robert Thomas, "The Enemies of the People," in Bahr, Chadwick, and Day, eds., *Native Americans Today*, pp. 177–92.
18. A more elaborate discussion of this process can be found in Donald Noel, "A Theory of Ethnic Stratification," *Social Problems*, 16 (1968), pp. 157–72.
19. John Blassingame, *The Slave Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).
20. There is a continuing controversy over the question of African survivals in contemporary Black culture. The issue is too complex to be dealt with here, but a good beginning can be found in Robert Blauner, *Racial Oppression in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), chap. 4.
21. Norma Carson, "The Role of Informal Adoption in the Liberation of Black Women" (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Sociological Association, Jackson, Miss., Oct. 1982).
22. Jacqueline Jones, *A Bridge of "Bent Backs and Laboring Muscles": Black Working Women in the Rural South*, Working Paper no. 67 (Wellesley, Mass.: Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women, 1980).
23. Almquist, *Minorities, Gender and Work*, pp. 47–56.
24. A somewhat heated discussion of this issue can be found in Jacquelyne Jackson, "But Where Are the Men?" *Black Scholar*, 3 (1971), pp. 30–41.
25. Linda J. M. LaRue, "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation," in Cox, ed., *Female Psychology*, pp. 216–25.
26. Anna Nieto-Gomez, "Heritage of La Hembra," in Cox, ed., *Female Psychology*, pp. 226–34. Copyright by Anna Nieto-Gomez.
27. The *encomienda* was a plantationlike enterprise, controlled by a Spanish landlord. The native people worked there in a relationship to the Spanish master that was semifeudal and semislave.
28. Betty Garcia-Bahne, "La Chicana and the Chicano Family," in Rosaura Sanchez and Rosa Martinez Cruz, eds., *Essays on la Mujer* (Los Angeles: University of California, Chicano Studies Center Publications, 1977), p. 39.
29. David Alvirez and Frank D. Bean, "The Mexican-American Family," in Mindel and Habenstein, eds., *Ethnic Families in America*, p. 278.
30. Leo Grebler, Joan W. Moore, and Ralph C. Guzman, *The Mexican-American People* (New York: Free Press, 1970), p. 366.
31. Garcia-Bahne, "La Chicana and the Chicano Family."
32. This historical summary was compiled from various sources. See especially S. Dale McLemore, "The Origins of Mexican American Subordination in Texas," *Social Science Quarterly*, 53 (1973), pp. 656–70; Carey McWilliams, *North from Mexico, The Spanish-speaking People of the United States* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968); and Grebler, Moore, and Guzman, *The Mexican-American People*.
33. Garcia-Bahne, "La Chicana and the Chicano Family."
34. Emory Bogardus, "Repatriation and Readjustment," in Manuel P. Servin, ed., *The Mexican-Americans: An Awakening Minority* (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1970), pp. 88–97.
35. "Bracero Politics: A Special Report," unsigned article in *Ramparts*, 1965, reprinted in Servin, ed., *The Mexican-Americans*, pp. 179–99. See also Ann Northrup, "Government Farmworkers Policies—Slim Pickings," *Ms.*, June 1978, p. 58, and Craig Jenkins, "The Transformation of a Constituency into a Movement: Farmworker Organizing in California," in Jo Freeman, ed., *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies* (New York: Longman, 1983), pp. 52–70.

36. Margarita B. Melville, "Selective Acculturation of Female Mexican Migrants," in Margarita B. Melville, ed., *Twice a Minority: Mexican American Women*, (St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co., 1980), pp. 155–63.

37. Linda Whiteford, "Mexican American Women as Innovators," in Melville, ed., *Twice a Minority*, pp. 109–27.

38. Dudley L. Poston, Jr., and David Alvirez, "On the Cost of Being a Mexican-American Worker," *Social Science Quarterly*, 53 (1973), pp. 697–709. See also Laura E. Arroyo, "Industrial and Occupational Distribution of Chicana Workers," *Atzlan*, 4 (1974), pp. 343–82.

39. Many of the articles in Melville, ed., *Twice a Minority*, stress the issue of obtaining adequate health care for Chicanos. Medical services are not adequately distributed to the rural, less affluent, minority groups in this country.

40. Terry Mason, "Symbolic Strategies for Change: A Discussion of the Chicana Women's Movement," in Melville, ed., *Twice a Minority*, pp. 95–108.

41. Maxine Baca Zinn, "Political Familism: Toward Sex Role Equality in Chicano Families," *Atzlan*, 6 (1975), pp. 13–26.

42. Michael Myerson, "Puerto Rico, Our Backyard Colony," in Francesco Cordasco and Eugene Bucchioni, eds., *The Puerto Rican Experience* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1973), pp. 114–24. See also Eva E. Sandis, "Characteristics of Puerto Rican Migrants to and from the United States," in Cordasco and Bucchioni, eds., *The Puerto Rican Experience*, pp. 127–49.

43. Lois Gray, "The Jobs Puerto Ricans Hold in New York City," *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1978, pp. 12–16.

44. Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, *Puerto Rican Americans: The Meaning of Migration to the Mainland* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977).

45. Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, "The Puerto Rican Family," in Mindel and Habenstein, eds., *Ethnic Families in America*, pp. 192–217.

46. Lourdes Miranda King, "Puertorriqueñas in the United States: The Impact of Double Discrimination," *Civil Rights Digest* (spring 1974), p. 24.

47. Edward W. Christensen, "The Puerto Rican Woman: A Profile," in Edna Acosta-Belén, ed., *The Puerto Rican Woman* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1979), pp. 51–63. See also Edna Acosta-Belén and Barbara R. Sjostrom, "The Educational and Professonal Status of Puerto Rican Women," in Acosta-Belén, *The Puerto Rican Woman*, pp. 64–74.

48. Marya Muñoz Vásquez, "The Effects of Role Expectations on the Marital Status of Urban Puerto Rican Women," in Acosta-Belén, *The Puerto Rican Woman*, p. 80.

49. Fitzpatrick, "The Puerto Rican Family."

50. Gray, "The Jobs Puerto Ricans Hold."

51. King, "Puertorriqueñas in the United States."

52. Lynn D. Bender, "The Cuban Exiles: An Analytical Sketch," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 5 (1973), pp. 271–78.

53. Geoffrey Fox, "Cuban Workers in Exile," *Transaction*, 8 (1971), pp. 21–30.

54. Myra Marx Ferree, "Employment without Liberation: Cuban Women in the United States," *Social Science Quarterly*, 60 (1978), pp. 35–50.

55. Almquist, *Minorities, Gender and Work*.

56. Alejandro Portes, "Dilemmas of a Golden Exile: Integration of Cuban Refugee Families in Milwaukee," *American Sociological Review*, 34 (1969), pp. 504–19.

57. Ferree, "Employment without Liberation."

58. Norris Hundley, Jr., *The Asian American: The Historical Experience* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 1976).

59. Rose Hum Lee, "Chinese Americans," in Francis Brown and Joseph S. Roucek, eds., *One America* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), pp. 309–18; Harry L. Kitano, *Japanese Americans: Evolution of a Subculture* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976).
60. Monica Boyd, "Oriental Immigration: The Experience of the Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Populations in the United States," *International Migration Review*, 5 (1971), pp 48–80.
61. Ibid.
62. Lucie Cheng Hirata, "Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth Century America," *Signs*, 5 (1979), pp. 3–79.
63. Irene Fujitomi and Diane Wong, "The New Asian-American Woman," in Stanley Sue and Nathan Wagner, eds., *Asian Americans: Psychological Perspectives*, (Palo Alto, Calif.: Science and Behavior Books, 1973), pp. 236–48.
64. Boyd, "Oriental Immigration."
65. Elaine M. Murphy and Patricia Cancellier, *Immigration: Questions and Answers* (Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau, 1982).
66. Almquist, *Minorities, Gender and Work*.
67. Harry H. L. Kitano and Akemi Kikumura, "The Japanese American Family," in Mindel and Habenstein, eds., *Ethnic Families in America*, pp. 41–60.
68. R. Brooke Jacobsen, "Changes in the Chinese Family," *Social Science*, 51 (1976), pp. 26–31; Fujitomi and Wong, "The New Asian-American Woman."
69. Lucy Jen Huang, "The Chinese American Family," in Mindel and Habenstein, eds., *Ethnic Families in America*, pp. 124–47.
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ROSE WEITZ

What price independence? Social reactions to lesbians, spinsters, widows, and nuns

For seven days in 1981, nineteen-year-old Stephanie Riethmiller was held captive by two men and a woman in a secluded Alabama cabin. During that time, according to Riethmiller, her captors constantly harangued her on the sinfulness of homosexuality, and one captor raped her nightly. Riethmiller's parents, who feared that their daughter was involved in a lesbian relationship with her roommate, had paid $8,000 for this "deprogramming"; her mother remained in the next room throughout her captivity. When the kidnappers were brought to trial, the jury, in the opinion of the judge, "permit[ted] their moral evaluations to enter into their legal conclusions" and failed to bring in a guilty verdict (Raskin 1982, 19).

As the Riethmiller case shows, the individual who identifies herself as a lesbian—or who is so labeled by others—may face severe social, economic, and legal sanctions. Along with communists, the diseased, and the insane, persons who openly acknowledge their homosexuality may be denied admission to the United States. In most U.S. jurisdictions, discrimination against homosexuals in housing, employment, child custody, and other areas of life is legal, while homosexual behavior is illegal. Gay persons are not covered under any of the national civil rights acts, and most court decisions have held that they are not covered under the equal protection clause of the United States Constitution. (For an excellent review of the legal status of homosexuality, see Rivera 1979.)

These legal restrictions reflect generally held social attitudes. Surveys conducted during the 1970s using large national probability samples found that between 70 percent and 75 percent of the Americans interviewed believed that sexual relations between two members of the same sex were always wrong (Glenn and Weaver 1979).

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CROSS-CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL VIEWS OF LESBIANISM

To most Americans, stigmatization and punishment of lesbianism seem perfectly natural. Yet such has not always been the case. In fact, a study of attitudes toward homosexuality in seventy-six cultures around the world found that in 64 percent of those cultures "homosexual activities of one sort or another are considered normal and socially acceptable for certain members of the community" (Ford and Beach 1951, 130).

In the western world, male homosexuality, which had been an accepted part of Greek and Roman culture, was increasingly rejected by society as the power of the Christian church grew (Barrett 1979). Yet lesbianism generally remained unrecognized legally and socially until the beginning of the modern age. Instead, beginning with the Renaissance, intimate "romantic friendships" between women were a common part of life, at least among the middle and upper classes (Faderman 1981).[1]

> Women who were romantic friends were everything to each other. They lived to be together. They thought of each other constantly. They made each other deliriously happy or horribly miserable by the increase or abatement of their proffered love. They were jealous of other female friends (and certainly of male friends) who impinged on their beloved's time or threatened to carry away a portion of her affections. They vowed that if it were at all possible they would someday live together, or at least die together, and they declared that both eventualities would be their greatest happiness. They embraced and kissed and walked hand in hand, and some even held each other all night in sleep. But unless they were transvestites or considered "unwomanly" in some male's conception, there was little chance that their relationships would be considered lesbian [Faderman 1981, 84].

We cannot know whether most romantic friends expressed their love for women genitally, and we do know that most were married to men (at least in part for economic survival). A reading of letters and journals from this period leaves no doubt, however, of the erotic and emotional intensity of these relationships between women and little doubt that in another era the relationships would have been expressed sexually (Smith-Rosenberg 1975; Faderman 1981). Yet belief in the purity of these relationships lingered even into the twentieth century. For example, when the British Parliament attempted in 1885 to add mention of lesbianism to its criminal code, Queen Victoria refused to sign the bill, on the ground that such behavior did not exist (Ettorre 1980).

Given that lesbianism has not always elicited negative social reactions, the current intolerance of it cannot derive from some universal biological or ethical law. What, then, causes these negative social reactions? I suggest in this article that at least part of the answer lies in the threat that lesbianism presents to the power of males in society. Furthermore, I suggest that whenever men fear women's sexual or economic independence, all unmarried women face an increased risk of stigmatization and punishment. The experience of such diverse groups as lesbians, medieval nuns, and Hindu widows shows the interrelated social fates of all women not under the direct control of men.

LESBIANS AND THE THREAT TO MALE POWER

Western culture teaches that women are the weaker sex, that they cannot flourish—or perhaps even survive—without the protection of men. Women are taught that they cannot live happy and fulfilled lives without a Prince Charming, who is superior to them in all ways. In the struggle to find and keep their men, women learn to view each other as untrustworthy competitors. They subordinate the development of their own psychological, physical, and professional strengths to the task of finding male protectors who will make up for their shortcomings. In this way, western culture keeps women from developing bonds with each other, while it maintains their dependence on men.

Lesbians[2] throw a large wrench into the works of this cultural system. In a society that denigrates women, lesbians value women enough to spend their lives with women rather than with men. Lesbians therefore do not and cannot rely on the protection of men. Knowing that they will not have that protection, lesbians are forced to develop their own resources. The very survival of lesbians therefore suggests the potential strength of all women and their ability to transcend their traditional roles. At the same time, since lesbians do not have even the illusion of male protection that marriage provides, and since they are likely to see their fate as tied to other women rather than to individual men, lesbians may be more likely than heterosexual women to believe in the necessity of fighting for women's rights; the heavy involvement of lesbians in the feminist movement seems to support this thesis (Abbott and Love 1972).

Lesbians also threaten the dominant cultural system by presenting, or at least appearing to present, an alternative to the typical inequality of heterosexual relationships. Partners attempting to equalize power in a heterosexual relationship must first neutralize deeply ingrained traditional sex roles. Since lesbian relationships generally contain no built-in assumption of the superiority of one partner,[3] developing an egalitarian relationship may be easier. Lesbian relationships suggest both that a love between equals is possible and that an alternative way of obtaining such a love may exist. Regardless of the actual likelihood of achieving equality in a lesbian relationship, the threat to the system remains, as long as lesbian relationships are believed to be more egalitarian. This threat increases significantly when, as in the past few years, lesbians express pride in and satisfaction with their life-style.

If lesbianism incurs social wrath because of the threat it presents to existing sexist social arrangements, then we should find that lesbianism is most negatively viewed by persons who hold sexist beliefs. Evidence from various studies (summarized in Weinberger and Millham 1979) supports this hypothesis. Homophobia (i.e., fear and hatred of homosexuals) appears strongly correlated with support for traditional sex roles. Survey data suggest that support for traditional sex roles explains homophobia better than do negative or conservative attitudes toward sex in general (MacDonald et al. 1973; MacDonald and Games 1974).

Historical data on when and under what circumstances lesbianism became stigmatized also support the contention of a link between that stigma and the threat lesbianism poses to male power. As described above, romantic friendships between women were common in both Europe and America from the Renaissance through the late nineteenth century. The women involved were generally accepted or at least tolerated by society even in the few cases where their relationships were openly sexual. That acceptance ceased, however, if either of the women attempted to usurp male privilege in some way—by wearing men's clothing, using a dildo, or passing as a man. Only in these circumstances were pre-modern-era lesbians likely to suffer social sanctions. In looking at both historical records and fiction from the thirteenth through the nineteenth centuries, Faderman (1981) found that women were, at most, lightly punished for lesbianism unless they wore male clothing.[4] She therefore concludes that "at the base it was not the sexual aspects of lesbianism as much as the attempted usurpation of male prerogative by women who behaved like men that many societies appeared to find most disturbing" (Faderman 1981, 17).

As long as the women involved did not attempt to obtain male privileges, romantic friends ran little risk of censure before the late nineteenth century. The factors behind the shift in attitude that occurred at that time again suggest the importance of the threat that lesbianism seemed to pose to male power.

Before the twentieth century, only a small number of independently wealthy women (such as the Ladies of Llangollen [Mavor 1973]) were able to establish their own households and live out their lives with their female companions (Faderman 1981). By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, the combined effects of the Civil War in this country and of male migration away from rural areas in both the United States and Europe had created a surplus of unmarried women in many communities. At the same time, the growth of the feminist movement had led to increased educational opportunities for women. These factors, coupled with the growth of industrialization, opened the possibility of employment and an independent existence to significant numbers of women.

Once female independence became a real economic possibility, it became a serious concern to those intent on maintaining the sexual status quo. Relationships between women, which previously had seemed harmless, now took on a new and threatening appearance. Only at this point do new theories emerge that reject the Victorian image of the passionless woman (Cott 1978), acknowledge females as sexual beings, and define lesbianism as pathological.

Stereotypes of lesbianism, first developed in the early twentieth century, reduce the threat to existing social arrangements by defusing the power of lesbianism as a viable alternative life-style. According to these stereotypes, all lesbians are either butches or femmes, and their relationships merely mimic heterosexual relationships. Lesbianism, therefore, seems to offer no advantages over heterosexuality.

Cultural stereotypes defuse lesbian sexuality by alternately denying and exaggerating it. These stereotypes hold that women become lesbians because of either their inability to find a man or their hatred of men. Such stereotypes deny that lesbianism may be a positive choice, while suggesting that lesbianism can be cured by the right man. The supposed futility of lesbian sexuality was summed up by best-selling author Dr. David Reuben in the phrase, "one vagina plus another vagina still equals zero" (1969, 217). (Reuben further invalidated lesbianism by locating his entire discussion of the subject within his chapter on prostitution; male homosexuality was "honored" with its own chapter.) In other cultural arenas, lesbians and lesbianism are defined in purely sexual terms, stripped of all romantic, social, or political content. In this incarnation, lesbianism can be subverted into a vehicle for male sexual pleasure; in the world of pornographic films, men frequently construct lesbian scenes to play out their own sexual fantasies.

In sum, strong evidence suggests that the negative social reactions to lesbianism reflect male fears of female independence, and the social sanctions and cultural stereotypes serve to lessen the threat that these independent women pose to male power.

If this hypothesis is true, then it should also hold for other groups of women not under direct male control. Next, I briefly discuss how, historically, negative social reactions to such women seem most likely to develop whenever men fear women's sexual or economic independence.

SPINSTERS, WIDOWS, AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS

The inquisition against witches that occurred from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries represents the most extreme response in the western world to the threat posed by independent women. The vast majority of the persons executed for witchcraft were women; estimates of the number killed range from under one hundred thousand to several million (Daly 1978). Accusations of witchcraft typically involved charges that the women healed sickness, engaged in prohibited sexual practices, or controlled reproduction (Ehrenreich and English 1973). Such activities threatened the power of the church by giving individuals (especially women) greater control over their own lives, reducing their dependence on the church for divine intervention while inhibiting the natural increase of the Catholic population.

The witchcraft trials occurred in a society undergoing the first throes of industrialization and urbanization (Nelson 1979). The weakening of the rural extended family forced many women to look for employment outside the home. These unattached women proved especially vulnerable to accusations of witchcraft (Nelson 1979; Daly 1978). As Mary Daly points out, "The targets of attack in the witchcraze were not women defined by assimilation into the patriarchal family. Rather, the witchcraze focused predominantly upon women who had rejected marriage (Spinsters) [sic] and some who had survived it (widows)" (1978, 184).

Contemporary theological beliefs regarding female sexuality magnified the perceived economic and social threat posed by unmarried women. The medieval church viewed all aspects of female sexuality with distrust; unless a woman was virginal or proven chaste, she was believed to be ruled by her sexual desires (Ehrenreich and English 1973). Catholic doctrine blamed Eve's licentiousness for the fall from grace in the Garden of Eden. According to the most popular medieval "manual" for witchhunters, the *Malleus Maleficarum*, most witches were women because "all witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is in women insatiable" (Kramer and Sprenger 1971, 120). Given this theology, any woman not under the direct sexual control of a man would appear suspect, if not outright dangerous.

For most women living before the nineteenth century who wished to or were forced to remain unmarried, entering the religious life was the only socially acceptable option.[5] During the Middle Ages, a woman could either become a nun or join one of the "secular convents" known as *Beguines* (Nelson 1979; Boulding 1976). Beguines arose to serve the population of surplus unmarried women that had developed in the early European cities. Residents of Beguines took a vow of chastity and obedience while living there, but they could marry thereafter. They spent their days in work and prayer.

Beguines threatened the monopolies of both the guilds and the church. The guilds feared the economic competition of these organized skilled women workers, while the church feared their social and religious independence (Nelson 1979); the Beguines' uncloistered life seemed likely to lead women into sin, while the lack of perpetual vows freed them from direct church supervision. For these reasons, the church in the fourteenth century ordered the Beguine houses dissolved, although some have continued nonetheless to the present day. Residents were urged either to marry or to become nuns (Boulding 1976).

The history of convents similarly illustrates the church's distrust of independent women (Eckenstein 1963). In the early medieval period, many nuns lived with their families. Some nuns showed their religious vocation through the wearing of a veil, while others wore no distinctive dress. Convents served as centers of learning for women, providing educational opportunities not available elsewhere. During this period, many "double monasteries" flourished, in which male and female residents lived and shared decision-making authority.

Given medieval ideas regarding the spiritual weakness and inherent carnality of women, the independence of early medieval nuns could not be allowed to last long. The developing laws of feudalism increasingly restricted the right of women to own land, so that, by the Renaissance, women faced increasing difficulties in attempting to found or to endow convents, while friars began to take over the management of existing convents (Eckenstein 1963). The church gradually closed all double monasteries, pressuring nuns to enter cloisters and to wear religious habits. Education for nuns increasingly seemed unnecessary or even dangerous. For this reason, by the sixteenth century church authorities had significantly decreased the educational opportunities available in most convents, although some convents did manage to preserve their intellectual traditions. Once Latin ceased to be taught, nuns were effectively excluded from all major church decisions.

As Protestant ideas began to infiltrate Europe, the status of unmarried women declined. One of the few areas in which Catholics and early Protestants agreed was the danger presented by independent women. Responding to flagrant sexual offenses in medieval monasteries, Protestants concluded that few men—let alone women, given their basically carnal nature—could maintain a celibate life. They therefore viewed "the religious profession [as] a thing of evil and temptation in which it was not possible to keep holy" (Charitas Perckheimer, quoted in Eckenstein 1963, 467). To Protestants, "marriage was the most acceptable state before God and . . . a woman has no claim to consideration except in her capacity as wife and mother" (Eckenstein 1963, 433). These beliefs, coupled with the political aims of Protestant rulers, culminated in the forced dissolution of convents and monasteries in many parts of Europe. In Protestant Europe, women were left without a socially acceptable alternative to marriage, while, in Catholic Europe, nuns had been stripped of their autonomy.

The belief in female carnality continued until the nineteenth century. At that point, while lower-class women were still considered sexually wanton by their social betters, prescriptive literature began to paint an image of upper-class women as passionless (Cott 1978). In this situation, unmarried lower-class women continued to suffer severe social sanctions as real or suspected prostitutes. Unmarried upper-class women continued to be stigmatized as unnatural, since they were not fulfilling their alloted role as wives and mothers. These upper-class women did not seem particularly threatening, however, since they were assumed, at least in public discourse, to be asexual beings. As a result, social sanctions against them diminished sharply, not to emerge again until women's new-found economic independence significantly changed the social context of romantic friendships among women.

In this historical overview I have so far discussed only events in the western world. In the West, widows probably evoke less of a sense of threat than do other unmarried women, since widows do not generally seem to have chosen their fate. It is instructive to compare the fate of Hindu widows, who are believed to have caused their husbands' deaths by sins they committed in this or a previous life (Daly 1978; Stein 1978).

Since a Hindu woman's status is determined by her relationship to a man, and since Hindu custom forbids remarriage, widows literally have no place in that society. A widow is a superfluous economic burden on her family. She is also viewed as a potential source of dishonor, since Hindus believe that "women are by nature sexually unreliable and incapable of leading chaste lives without a husband to control them" (Stein 1978, 255). For the benefit of her family and for her own happiness in future lives, a widow was in the past expected to commit suttee—to throw herself alive onto her husband's burning funeral pyre.[6] The horror of suttee was multiplied by the practice of polygamy and by the practice of marrying young girls to grown men, which resulted in the widowing of many young girls before they even reached puberty (Stein 1978; Daly 1978). Suttee, child marriage, and polygamy are illegal under the current government, but they do still occur.

As her only alternative to suttee, a widow was allowed to adopt a life of such poverty and austerity that she rarely survived for long. Her life was made even more miserable by the fact that only faithful wives were permitted to commit suttee. The refusal to commit suttee might therefore be regarded as an admission of infidelity. If a woman declined to immolate herself, her relatives might force her to do so, to protect both her honor and the honor of her family.

STIGMATIZATION OF MALE HOMOSEXUALS

Reflecting the basic concerns of this book, this article has discussed male homosexuality only in passing. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that the sanctions against male homosexuality appear even stronger than those against lesbianism. Why might this be so? First, I would argue that anything women do is considered relatively trivial—be it housework, mothering, or lesbianism. Second, whereas lesbians threaten the status quo by refusing to accept their inferior position as women, gay males may threaten it even more by appearing to reject their privileged status as men. Prevailing cultural mythology holds that lesbians want to be males. In a paradoxical way, therefore, lesbians may be perceived as upholding "male" values. Male homosexuality, on the other hand, is regarded as a rejection of masculine values; gay males are regarded as feminized "sissies" and "queens." Thus male homosexuality, with its implied rejection of male privilege, may seem even more incomprehensible and threatening than lesbianism. Finally, research indicates that people in general are more fearful and intolerant of homosexuals of their own sex than of homosexuals belonging to the opposite sex (Weinberger and Millham 1979). The greater stigmatization of male than female homosexuality may therefore simply reflect the greater ability of males to enforce their prejudices.

CONCLUSIONS

The stigmatization of independent women—whether spinster, widow, nun, or lesbian—is neither automatic nor natural. Rather, it seems to derive from a particular social constellation in which men fear women's sexual and economic independence. Sociological theory explains how stigmatizing individuals as deviant may serve certain purposes for the dominant community, regardless of the accuracy of the accusations leveled (Erikson 1962). First, particularly when social norms are changing rapidly, labeling and punishing certain behaviors as deviant emphasizes the new or continued unacceptability of those behaviors. The stigmatization of "romantic friendships" in the early twentieth century, for example, forced all members of society to recognize that social norms had changed and that such relationships would no longer be tolerated. Second, stigmatizing certain groups as deviant may increase solidarity within the dominant group, as the dominant group unites against its common enemy. Third, stigmatizing as deviant the individuals who challenge traditional ideas may reduce the threat of social change, if those individuals either lose credibility or are removed from the community altogether.

These principles apply to the stigmatization of independent women, from the labeling of nontraditional women as witches in medieval society to the condemnation of lesbians in contemporary society. Medieval inquisitors used the label *witch* to reinforce the normative boundaries of their community, to unite that community against the perceived source of its problems, and to eliminate completely women who seemed to threaten the social order. Currently, the word *lesbian* is used not only to describe women who love other women but also to censure women who overstep the bounds of the traditional female role and to teach all women that such behavior will not be tolerated. Feminists, women athletes, professional women, and others risk being labeled lesbian for their actions and beliefs. Awareness of the potential social consequences of that label exerts significant pressure on all women to remain in their traditonal roles.

Antifeminist forces have used the lesbian label to denigrate all feminists, incite community wrath against them, and dismiss their political claims. In 1969 and 1970, some feminists responded to this social pressure by purging lesbians from their midst and proclaiming their moral purity (Abbott and Love 1972). This tactic proved extremely self-destructive, as movement organizations collapsed in bitterness and dissension. In addition, eliminating lesbian members had little effect, since lesbian-baiting by antifeminists was equally damaging to the movement whether or not it was accurate.

By late 1970, many feminists had realized that trying to remove lesbians from their organizations was both self-destructive and ineffective. In response to this knowledge, various feminist organizations went on record acknowledging sexual preference as a feminist and a civil rights issue and supporting the rights of lesbians (Abbott and Love 1972). In a press conference held in December 1970, various women's liberation activists stated:

> Women's Liberation and Homosexual Liberation are both struggling toward a common goal: a society free from defining and categorizing people by virtue of gender and/or sexual preference. "Lesbian" is a label used as a psychic weapon to keep women locked into their male-defined "feminine role." The essence of that role is that a woman is defined in terms of her relationship to men. A woman is called a Lesbian when she functions autonomously. Women's autonomy is what Women's Liberation is all about [quoted in Abbott and Love 1972, 124].

A leaflet distributed the same month by the New York branch of the National Organization for Women acknowledged that, when charges of lesbianism are made, "it is not one woman's sexual preference that is under attack—it is the freedom of all women to openly state values that fundamentally challenge the basic structure of patriarchy" (quoted in Abbott and Love 1972, 122).

It seems, then, that the fates of feminists and lesbians are inextricably intertwined. Unless and until women's independence is accepted, lesbians will be stigmatized, and unless and until the stigma attached to lesbianism diminishes, the lesbian label will be used as a weapon against those who work for women's independence.

NOTES

1. We have little first-hand data about the intimate lives of lower-class women. Few poorer women could write, and, even if they could and did record their lives, their letters and journals were rarely preserved.
2. I am using the terms *lesbian* and *heterosexual* as nouns simply to ease the flow of the writing. This article focuses on stigmatization, not on some intrinsic quality of individuals. Hence, in this article, *lesbian* and *heterosexual* refer to persons who adopt a particular life-style or who are labled as doing so by significant others. These terms reflect shared social fates, not some essential, inflexible aspect of the individual.
3. While there is no way to ascertain exactly what proportion of lesbian couples adopted butch–femme relationships in the past, recent studies suggest that such relationships have all but disappeared, especially among younger and more feminist lesbians (Wolf 1979; Tanner 1978).

4. The crime for which Joan of Arc was eventually condemned was not witchcraft but the heretical act of wearing male clothing.
5. However, it should be realized that convent life was not always a chosen refuge. Just as a father could marry his daughter to whatever man he chose, so too could he "marry" his daughter to the church.
6. Suttee was most common among the upper castes (where a widow meant an extra mouth, but not an extra pair of hands), but it occurred throughout Hindu society (Stein 1978).

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NANCY HENLEY and JO FREEMAN

The sexual politics of interpersonal behavior

Social interaction is the battlefield on which the daily war between the sexes is fought. It is here that women are constantly reminded what their "place" is and here that they are put back in their place, should they venture out. Thus, social interaction serves as the locus of the most common means of social control employed against women. By being continually reminded of their inferior status in their interactions with others, and continually compelled to acknowledge that status in their own patterns of behavior, women may internalize society's definition of them as inferior so thoroughly that they are often unaware of what their status is. Inferiority becomes habitual, and the inferior place assumes the familiarity—and even desirability—of home.

Different sorts of cues in social interaction aid this enforcement of one's social definition, particularly the verbal message, the nonverbal message transmitted within a social relationship, and the nonverbal message transmitted by the environment. Our educational system emphasizes the verbal message but teaches us next to nothing about how we interpret and react to the nonverbal one. Just how important nonverbal messages are, however, is shown by the finding of Argyle et al.[1] that nonverbal cues have over four times the impact of verbal ones when verbal and nonverbal cues are used together. Even more important for women, Argyle found that female subjects were more responsive to nonverbal cues (compared with verbal ones) than male subjects. This finding has been confirmed in the extensive research of Rosenthal and his colleagues[2]: in studies of subjects of all ages and from a variety of occupations and cultures, they found consistently greater sensitivity to nonverbal communication among females than among males. If women are to understand how the subtle forces of social control work in their lives, they must learn as much as possible about how nonverbal cues affect people and particularly how they perpetuate the power and superior status enjoyed by men.

THE VISUAL WORLD

Even if a woman encounters no one else directly in her day, visual status reminders permeate her environment. As she moves through the day, she absorbs

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any variations of the same status theme, whether or not she is aware of it. Male bosses dictate while female secretaries bend over their steno pads. Male doctors operate while female nurses assist. Restaurants are populated with waitresses serving men. Magazine and billboard ads remind the woman that home maintenance and child care are her foremost responsibilities and that being a sex object for male voyeurs is her greatest asset. If she is married, her mail reminds her that she is a mere "Mrs." appended to her husband's name. When she is introduced to others or fills out a written form, the first thing she must do is divulge her marital status, acknowledging the social rule that the most important information anyone can know about her is her legal relationship to a man.

Advertisements form a large part of our visual world, and the messages of advertisements are subtle but compelling in suggesting that the way the sexes are shown in them is the usual and appropriate arrangement. Sociologist Erving Goffman[3] describes six themes involving gender distinctions in advertising pictures: *relative size,* especially height, used to symbolize the greater importance of men than of women; *feminine touch* that is delicate, not truly grasping; *function ranking,* in which males direct and guide action while females are directed or watch; *the family,* in which fathers are linked with boys (and are distant) and mothers are linked with girls and girlhood; the *ritualization of subordination,* in which women by lower spatial position, canting postures of the head and body, smiles, and clowning, display subordinate status to men; and *licensed withdrawal,* in which women are shown as relatively less oriented to the situation (often flooded with emotion or distracted by trivia) and are dependent on men. Goffman draws a parallel between the ritual of our everyday interaction and the hyper-ritualization of advertising: our "natural expressions" are commercials too, performed to sell a view of the world and of female/male (as well as other) relationships.

ASYMMETRY IN SOCIAL INTERACTION

Environmental cues set the stage on which the power relationships of the sexes are acted out and the assigned status of each sex is reinforced.[4] Though studies have been made of the several means by which status inequalities are communicated in interpersonal behavior, they do not usually deal with power relationships between men and women. Goffman has pointed to many characteristics associated with status:

> Between status equals we may expect to find interaction guided by symmetrical familiarity. Between superordinate and subordinate we may expect to find asymmetrical relations, the superordinate having the right to exercise certain familiarities which the subordinate is not allowed to reciprocate. Thus, in the research hospital, doctors tended to call nurses by their first names, while nurses responded with "polite" or "formal" address. Similarly, in American business organizations the boss may thoughtfully ask the elevator man how his children are, but this entrance into another's life may be blocked to the elevator man, who can appreciate the concern but not return it. Perhaps the clearest form of this is found in the psychiatrist–patient relation, where the psychiatrist has a right to touch on aspects of the patient's life that the patient might not even allow himself to touch upon, while of course this privilege is not reciprocated.

> Rules of demeanor, like rules of deference, can be symmetrical or asymmetrical. Between social equals, symmetrical rules of demeanor seem often to be prescribed. Between unequals many variations can be found. For example, at staff meetings on the psychiatric units of the hospital, medical doctors had the privilege of swearing, changing the topic of conversation, and sitting in undignified positions; attendants, on the other hand, had the right to attend staff meetings and to ask questions during them . . . but were implicitly expected to conduct themselves with greater circumspection than was required of doctors. . . . Similarly, doctors had the right to saunter into the nurses' station, lounge on the station's dispensing counter, and engage in joking with the nurses; other ranks participated in this informal interaction with doctors, but only after doctors had initiated it.[5]

A status variable that illustrates rules of symmetry and asymmetry is the use of terms of address, widely studied by Brown and others.[6] In languages that have both familiar and polite forms of the second person singular ("you"), asymmetrical use of the two forms invariably indicates a status difference, and it always follows the same pattern. The person using the familiar form is always the superior to the person using the polite form. In English, the only major European language not to have dual forms of address, status differences are similarly indicated by the right of first-naming (addressing a person by his or her given name rather than surname); the status superior can first-name the inferior in situations in which the inferior must use the superior's title and last name. An inferior who breaks this rule by inappropriately using a superior's first name is considered insolent.[7]

According to Brown, the pattern evident in the use of forms of address applies to a very wide range of interpersonal behavior and invariably has two other components: (1) whatever form is used by a superior in situations of status inequality can be used reciprocally by intimates, and whatever form is used by an inferior is the socially prescribed usage for nonintimates; (2) initiation or increase of intimacy is the right of the superior. To use the example of naming again to illustrate the first component, friends use first names with each other, while strangers use titles and last names (though "instant" intimacy is considered proper in some cultures, such as our own, among status equals in informal settings). As an example of the second component, status superiors, such as professors, specifically tell status inferiors, such as students, when they can use the first name, and often rebuff the inferiors if they assume such a right unilaterally.

The relevance of these patterns to status differences between the sexes is readily seen. The social rules say that all moves to greater intimacy are a male prerogative: it is boys who are supposed to call girls for dates, men who are supposed to propose marriage to women, and males who are supposed to initiate sexual activity with females. Females who make "advances" are considered improper, forward, aggressive, brassy, or otherwise "unladylike." By initiating intimacy they have stepped out of their place and usurped a status prerogative. The value of such a prerogative is that it is a form of power. In interactions between the sexes, as in other human interactions, the one who has the right to initiate greater intimacy has more control over the relationship. Superior status brings with it not only greater prestige and greater privilege but also greater power.

DEMEANOR, POSTURE, AND DRESS

The advantages of superior status are exemplified in many of the means of communicating status. Like the doctors in Goffman's research hospital, men are allowed such privileges as swearing and sitting in undignified positions, but women are denied them. Though the male privilege of swearing is curtailed in mixed company, the body movement permitted to women may be circumscribed even in all-female groups. It is considered "unladylike" for a woman to use her body too forcefully, to sprawl, to stand with her legs widely spread, to sit with her feet up, or to cross the ankle of one leg over the knee of the other. Many of these positions are ones of strength or dominance.

Henley[8] has reviewed the research evidence for sex differences in nonverbal behavior, linking it with evidence for differences due to power, status, or dominance. She concludes that the symbols and gestures used by males tend to be those of power and dominance, while the gestures of females tend to be those of subordination and submission. Wex[9] reached similar conclusions through her examination of the public postures of women and men photographed in Germany.[10] The more "feminine" a woman's clothes, the more circumscribed the use of her body. Depending on her clothes, she may be expected to sit with her knees together, not to sit cross-legged, or not even to bend over. Though these taboos seem to have lessened in recent years, how much so is unknown, and there are recurring social pressures for a "return to femininity," while etiquette arbiters assert that women must retain feminine posture no matter what their clothing.

Prior to the 1920s women's clothes were designed to be confining and cumbersome. The dress reform movement, which disposed of corsets and long skirts, was considered by many to have more significance for female emancipation than women's suffrage.[11] Today women's clothes are designed to be revealing, but women are expected to restrict their body movements to avoid revealing too much. Furthermore, because women's clothes are contrived to cling and reveal women's physical features, rather than be loose as men's are, women must resort to purses instead of pockets to carry their belongings. These "conveniences" (purses) have become, in a time of unisex clothing and hairstyles and other blurred sex distinctions, one of the surest signs of sex, and thus have developed the character of a stigma, a sign of women's shame—for example, when they are used by comics to ridicule both women and transvestites.

ACCESS TO A PERSON'S SELF AND BODY

Women in our society are expected to reveal not only more of their bodies than men but also more of their minds and souls. Female socialization encourages greater expression of emotion than does male socialization. Whereas men are expected to be stolid and impassive and not to disclose their feelings beyond certain limits, women are expected to express their feelings fully. Such self-expression can disclose much about oneself, and, as Jourard and Lasakow[12] found, females are more self-disclosing to others than males are. This puts them at an immediate disadvantage.

The inverse relationship between disclosure and power has been reported in Goffman's earlier cited observations in a research hospital and in other studies. Slobin, Miller, and Porter[13] stated that individuals in a business organization are "more self-disclosing to their immediate superior than to their immediate subordinates." Self-disclosure is a means of enhancing another's power. When one has greater access to information about another person, one has a resource the other person does not have. Thus, not only does power give status but also status gives power. And those possessing neither must contribute to the power and status of others continuously.

Another factor adding to women's vulnerability is that they are socialized to *care* more than men—especially about personal relationships. This puts them at a disadvantage, as Ross articulated in what he called the Law of Personal Exploitation: "In any sentimental relation the one who cares less can exploit the one who cares more."[14] The same idea was stated more broadly by Waller and Hill as the Principle of Least Interest: "That person is able to dictate the conditions of association whose interest in the continuation of the affair is least."[15] In other words, women's caring, like their openness, gives them less power in a relationship.

One way to indicate acceptance of one's place and deference to those of superior status is to follow the rules of "personal space." Sommer has observed that dominant animals and human beings have a larger envelope of inviolability surrounding them—i.e., they are approached less closely—than those of lower status.[16] Willis made a study of the initial speaking distance set by an approaching person as a function of the speakers' relationship.[17] His finding that women were approached more closely than men—i.e., their personal space was smaller or more likely to be breached—is consistent with women's lower status. Like other subordinate animals, women tend to have less desirable spaces (smaller, less convenient, unwindowed), and their time, like their space, is readily invadable.[18]

TOUCHING

Touching is one of the closer invasions of one's personal space, and in our low-contact culture it implies privileged access to another person. People who accidentally touch other people generally take great pains to apologize; people forced into close proximity, for example, in a crowded elevator, often go to extreme lengths to avoid touching. Even the figurative meanings of the word convey a notion of access to privileged areas—e.g., to one's emotions (one is touched by a sad story), or to one's purse (one is touched for ten dollars). In addition, the act of touching can be a subtle physical threat.

Remembering the patterns that Brown found in terms of address, it is enlightening to consider the interactions between pairs of persons of different status, and picture who would be more likely to touch the other (put an arm around the shoulder or a hand on the back, tap the chest, hold the arm, or the like): teacher and student; master and servant; police officer and accused; doctor and patient; minister and parishioner; adviser and advisee; supervisor and worker; business executive and secretary. Again we see that the form used by the status superior—touching—is the form used between intimates of equal status. It is considered presumptuous for a person of low status to initiate touch, like first-naming, with a person of higher status.

There has been little investigation by social scientists of touching, but the few studies made so far indicate that females are touched more than males are. Goldberg and Lewis[19] and Lewis[20] report that from six months of age on, girl babies were touched more than boy babies. The data reported in Jourard,[21] and Jourard and Rubin[22] show that sons and fathers tended to refrain from touching each other and that, overall, women's mean total "being-touched" score was higher than men's.

Jourard and Rubin take the view that "touching is equated with sexual interest, either consciously, or at a less-conscious level,"[23] but there seems to be a sex difference in the interpretation of touch Lewis reflects this when he writes, "In general, for men in our culture, proximity (touching) is restricted to the opposite sex and its function is primarily sexual in nature."[24] Waitresses, secretaries, and women students are quite used to being touched by their male superordinates, but they are expected not to "misinterpret" such gestures as sexual advances. However, women who touch men may be interpreted as conveying sexual intent, as they have often found out when their intentions were quite otherwise. Such different interpretations are consistent with the status patterns found earlier. If touching indicates either power or intimacy, and women are deemed by men to be status inferiors, touching by women will be perceived as a gesture of intimacy, since it would be inconceivable for them to be exercising power.

A study by Henley tested the hypothesis that touching is associated with status.[25] In observations of incidents of touch in public urban places, higher status persons did touch lower status persons significantly more. In particular, men touched women more, even when all other variables were held constant. Similar findings were reported by Major.[26] Henley also reported observations of greater touching by higher status persons (including males) in the popular culture media and reported on a questionnaire study in which both females and males indicated greater expectations of being touched by higher status persons, and of touching lower status and female persons, than vice versa.[27]

Other nonverbal cues by which status is indicated have likewise not been adequately researched—for humans. But O'Connor argues that many of the gestures of dominance and submission that have been noted in the primates are equally present in humans.[28] They are used to maintain and reinforce the status hierarchy by reassuring those of higher status that those of lower status accept their place in the human pecking order.

GAZE AND DOMINANCE

The most studied nonverbal communication among humans is probably eye contact, and here too one finds a sex difference. It has repeatedly been found that women look more at another person in a dyad than men do.[29] Exline, Gray, and

Schuette suggest that "willingness to engage in mutual visual interaction is more characteristic of those who are oriented towards inclusive and affectionate interpersonal relations,"[30] but Rubin concludes that while "gazing may serve as a vehicle of emotional expression for women, [it] in addition may allow women to obtain cues from their male partners concerning the appropriateness of their behavior."[31] This interpretation is supported by the data of Efran and Broughton showing that male subjects too "maintain more eye contact with individuals toward whom they have developed higher expectancies for social approval."[32]

It is especially illuminating to look at the power relationships established and maintained by the manipulation of eye contact. The mutual glance can be seen as a sign of union, but when intensified into a stare it may become a way of doing battle.[33] Research reported by Ellsworth, Carlsmith, and Henson supports the notion that the stare can be interpreted as an aggressive gesture. These authors write, "Staring at humans can elicit the same sort of responses that are common in primates; that is, staring can act like a primate threat display."[34]

Though women engage in mutual visual interaction in its intimate form to a high degree, they may back down when looking becomes a gesture of dominance, especially when they are interacting with men.[35] O'Connor points out, "The direct stare or glare is a common human gesture of dominance. Women use the gesture as well as men, but often in modified form. While looking directly at a man, a woman usually has her head slightly tilted, implying the beginning of a 'presenting' [submissive] gesture or enough submission to render the stare ambivalent if not actually submissive."[36]

The idea that the averted glance is a gesture of submission is supported by the research of Hutt and Ounsted into the characteristic gaze aversion of autistic children. They remark that

> these children were never attacked [by peers] despite the fact that to a naive observer they appeared to be easy targets; this indicated that their gaze aversion had some signalling function similar to "facing away" in the kittiwake or "head-flagging" in the herring gull—behavior patterns which Tinbergen has termed "appeasement postures." In other words, gaze aversion inhibited any aggressive or threat behavior on the part of other conspecifics.[37]

The modest eye-lowering behavior learned by many females may act in a similar way.

VERBAL CUES TO DOMINANCE

Gestures of dominance and submission can be verbal as well as nonverbal. Subtle verbal cues—especially paralinguistic features, such as emphasis, inflection, pitch, and noncontent sounds—are often classified with nonverbal ones in the study of interpersonal interaction, because they have similar regulating functions aside from the traditional verbal content. Other features of verbal interaction, such as frequency and length of utterance, turn-taking patterns, interrupting, and allowing interruption, also help regulate interaction and establish dominance.

Sheer verbalization itself can be a form of dominance, rendering someone quite literally speechless by preventing the person from "getting a word in edgewise." Contrary to popular myth, men talk more than women, in both single-sex and mixed-sex groups. Within a group, a major means of asserting dominance is to interrupt. Those who want to dominate others interrupt more; those speaking will not permit themselves to be interrupted by their inferiors, but they will give way to those they consider their superiors.[38] It is not surprising, therefore, that Zimmerman and West found, in a sample of eleven natural conversations between women and men, that forty-six of the forty-eight interruptions were by males.[39]

In verbal communication one finds a pattern of differences between the sexes similar to that seen in nonverbal communication. It was observed earlier in this article that men have the privilege of swearing and hence have access to a vocabulary not customarily available to women. On the surface this seems to be an innocuous limitation, but it is significant because of the psychological function of swearing: it is one of the most harmless and effective ways of expressing anger. The common alternatives are to express one's feelings with physical violence or to suppress them and by so doing turn the anger in on oneself. The former is prohibited to both sexes (to different degrees), but the latter is decidedly encouraged in women. The result is that women are *intropunitive;* they punish themselves for their own anger rather than expressing it outwardly. Since anger turned inward is commonly viewed as a basis for depression, it is not surprising that depression is considerably more common in women than in men and in fact is the most prevalent form of "mental illness" among women. Obviously, the causes of female depression are complex.[40]

Swearing is perhaps the most obvious sex difference in language. Key has noted that sex differences are also to be found in phonological, semantic, and grammatical aspects of language as well as in word use.[41] Austin, for example, has commented that "in our culture little boys tend to be nasal . . . and little girls, oral," but that in the "final stages" of courtship the voices of both men and women are low and nasal.[42] The pattern cited by Brown,[43] in which the form appropriately used by status superiors is used between status equals in intimate situations, is again visible: in the intimate situation, the female adopts the vocal style of the male.

In situations in which intimacy is not a possible interpretation, it is not power but abnormality that is the usual interpretation. Female voices are expected to be soft and quiet—even when men are using loud voices. Women who do not fit this stereotype are often called *loud*—a word commonly applied derogatorily to other minority groups or out-groups.[44] One of the most popular derogatory terms for women is *shrill,* which, after all, simply means loud (applied to an out-group) and high-pitched (female).

GESTURES OF SUBMISSION

Other verbal characteristics of persons in inferior status positions are the tendencies to hesitate and apologize, often offered as submissive gestures in the face of threats or potential threats. If staring directly, pointing, and touching can be subtle nonverbal threats, the corresponding gestures of submission seem to be lowering the eyes from another's gaze, falling silent (or not beginning to speak at all) when interrupted or pointed at, and cuddling to the touch. Many of these nonverbal gestures of submission are very familiar. They are the traits our society assigns as desirable characteristics of females. Girls who have properly learned to be "feminine" have learned to lower their eyes, remain silent, back down, and cuddle at the appropriate times. There is even a word for this syndrome that is applied only to females: *coy*.

SEXUAL INTERACTION

Sexual interaction is expressed through nonverbal communication: the caress, the gaze, coming close to each other, the warm smile, smelling the other, provocative postures and inviting gestures; much sexual contact, unlike other forms of human interaction, is *purely* nonverbal. Sexual interaction, like all interaction, is conditioned by the social context in which it takes place. One particularly compelling aspect of that social context is that males have more power, prestige, and status than do females, a fact that cannot but affect heterosexual interaction. If even casual relationships between females and males are caught up in the social system in which males wield power over females, how much more does this power system affect the sexual relationship, which we consider the ultimate intimacy? In addition, in both heterosexual and homosexual interactions, relationships are affected by other power and status dimensions, such as work status, wealth, race, age, and interpersonal dominance. This power too is often expressed nonverbally.

Unfortunately, little has been written on nonverbal behavior, power, and sexuality examined simultaneously. However, the research and ideas presented earlier in this article may be applied to the sexual sphere. First, much can be said about a sexual relationship after observing the mutuality or nonmutuality of various gestures. For example, we may already believe that the person who is more dominant in the relationship is the one who takes a superior position in intercourse, the one around whose pleasure sexual activity is structured, and the one upon whose climax it is terminated. Beyond that, when gestures are not mutual (or not balanced over time), one person may dominate by initiating touching, hand-holding, and kissing; maintaining gaze; putting an arm around the other's back when sitting; initiating moves to greater intimacy in the course of a relationship or a single encounter; exerting more influence over the couple's spacing, postures, and walking pace; getting to hold hands with the preferred or dominant hand; having the hand in front when walking holding hands; and terminating as well as initiating hand-holding and kissing. Subordination may be expressed by the person who shows more emotional expressivity, shows more facial and kinesic activity, is more self-disclosing, accommodates timing and action to the other, and exhibits the reciprocal behaviors of those described as dominant.

These questions of who touches, who initiates, and who terminates apply, of course, to both heterosexual and homosexual relationships. However, in the heterosexual relationship we often have a good idea of what the answers will be; in fact, heterosexual custom has prescribed male leadership and dominance. But these are changing times, and many think that few aspects of our society are changing faster than sexual relationships and female/male interactions. Many people today do not wish to have unequal sexual relationships or to express sexual inequality unconsciously. However, since we generally take body language for granted and do not attend to it much, it may be hard to change: nonverbal expressions may lag behind changes in attitudes, values, and ideas. Slowness in changing this communication may keep us trapped in old modes of expression and old modes of relationship. No matter how egalitarian we may believe our relationships or sexual interactions to be, they will have an edge of inequality and imbalance until we bring our nonverbal expressions into line with our verbal ones.

DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SAME BEHAVIOR

Status differences between the sexes mean that many of the same traits and actions are differently interpreted when displayed by each sex. A man's behavior toward a woman might be interpreted as an expression of either power or intimacy, depending on the situation. When the same behavior is engaged in by a woman and directed toward a man, it is more likely to be interpreted as a gesture of intimacy—and intimacy between the sexes is typically seen as sexual in nature. Because our society's values say that women should not have power over men, women's nonverbal communication is rarely interpreted as an expression of power. If the situation precludes a sexual interpretation, women's assumption of the male prerogative may be dismissed as deviant (castrating, domineering, unfeminine, or the like). Women in supervisory positions thus often have a difficult time asserting their power nonverbally—gestures that are socially recognized as expressions of power when used by male supervisors may be denied or misinterpreted when used by women.

CHANGE

Knowledge of the significance of nonverbal communication can help us understand not only others' gestures but also our own, giving us a basis for social and personal change. However, just because certain gestures associated with males are responded to as powerful, women need not automatically adopt them. Rather than accepting "masculine" values without question, individual women will want to consider what they wish to express and how, and they will determine whether to adopt particular gestures or to insist that their own be responded to appropriately. There has been growing pressure on women to alter their verbal and nonverbal behavior[45] to the words and movements of "power," i.e., to those associated with men, often with little thought of the implications. It would be mistaken to assume that such gestures are automatically better and that it is only women who should change. Revealing emotions rather than remaining wooden-faced and unexpressive, for example, may be seen as weak when only one person in an interaction is doing it; but, in the long run, openness and expressivity—by all people—may be better for the individual, the interpersonal relationship, and the society. Women who wish to change their nonverbal behavior can monitor it in various situations to determine when it contradicts their intention or is otherwise a disservice, and only then change. They will wish to keep those behaviors that give them strength, whether they are associated with women or with men.

Women who do not wish to be classified either as deviant or as perpetually sexy, and who do not wish to struggle for a new interpretation of their gestures, must persist in playing the "proper" role by following the interpersonal behavior pattern prescribed for them. Followed repeatedly, these patterns function as a means of control. What is merely habitual is often seen as desirable. The more men and women interact in the way they have been trained to from birth without considering the meaning of what they do, the more they become dulled to the significance of their actions. Just as outsiders observing a new society are more aware of the status differences of that society than its members are, so those who play the sexual politics of interpersonal behavior are usually not conscious of what they do. Instead they continue to wonder that feminists make such a mountain out of such a "trivial" molehill.

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KAREN L. ADAMS and
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Sexism and the English language: The linguistic implications of being a woman

To analyze sexism in the English language—what it looks like, and how it affects the way women think, feel, and act in our society[1]—we must look at two aspects: (1) how female human beings are referred to in English, the cultural attitudes these kinds of references suggest, and their implications for the ways women see themselves and their role in society; and (2) the use of language as seen in characteristic speech habits of both women and men and the effects of these speech habits on how women lead their lives. Then we can take up the question of change—what is being done to combat linguistic sexism, and what more could be done.

REFERRING TO WOMEN

One of the most intriguing characteristics of language is that it acts as a kind of social mirror, reflecting the organization and dynamics of the society of which it is a part. Because of this, we can learn a great deal about a society by analyzing the structure of the language its members speak. Since our purpose here is to improve our understanding of the situation of women in *this* society, we will look at some of the words used to refer to women in English.

The Sexualization of Women

English words used to refer to women are often "sexually weighted." This is evident in some sex-specific pairs of nouns that are similar in meaning but in which the female form has taken on sexual overtones. A prime example is the set of terms *master* and *mistress*. Both of these words refer to someone who possesses and/or has power over someone or something else, as in "He is the master of his

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fate," or "She is the mistress of a great fortune." However, as Lakoff has pointed out, the word *mistress* has acquired a sexual connotation that its masculine counterpart has not.[2] Thus we can use a sentence like "Jane is Tom's mistress" to report the fact that Jane and Tom are sleeping together and be understood perfectly, while to attempt to describe the same situation with the expression "Tom is Jane's master" is to invite communicational disaster. The latter sentence fails to express its intended meaning because the word *master* is devoid of sexual connotations.

This kind of asymmetrical relationship between what are ostensibly male/female equivalents is not restricted to a single example. In the pair *sir* and *madam*, the latter refers to the proprietor of a brothel as well as serving as a term of address. Even the words *man* and *woman* may be seen to conform to this pattern. The sexual overtones inherent in the word *woman* show through clearly in a sentence such as: "After six months at sea, the first thing Bill wanted to do on leave was to find a woman." Then there is the case of the male academician who objected to the title of a new course because it was "too suggestive"—the title was "Women in the Social Order."[3]

Another indication of the sexualization of women in English is that the language seems to have so many more ways of describing women in terms of their sexuality than it has for men. Schulz reports the findings of two investigators who, as part of a larger study of slang, managed to collect over 500 synonyms for *prostitute*, but only 65 for the masculine sexual term *whoremonger*;[4] and she herself "located roughly a thousand words and phrases describing women in sexually derogatory ways. There is nothing approaching this multitude for describing men."[5]

Schulz also points out that many once quite neutral terms relating to women have degenerated into terms that have sexual or negative connotations or both. She explains how the word *hussy*, for example, is derived from the Old English *huswif* (housewife), whose meaning was simply "female head of the household." A *spinster* was originally someone who operated a spinning wheel. A *broad* was simply a young woman, and *tart* and *biddy* were terms of endearment![6]

Linguists generally agree that, when a language has an elaborate vocabulary on a given topic, it means that this topic is of particular concern or importance to the society as a whole. What, then, can we conclude from the fact that English has so many terms describing women in specifically sexual ways? Is it that a woman's sexuality is considered the most salient aspect of her being, rivaling or even outweighing her humanity in importance? Furthermore, why are so many of these terms pejorative? Is it due to the well-known "sex is dirty" attitude that is characteristic of our culture? If this is true, notice where it leaves women—in the position of having the essence of their existence defined in terms of something that is considered unclean and distasteful. The implications of this are sobering at best.

The Trivialization of Women

A look at the kinds of people and things that women tend to be grouped with in the English language can also tell us a great deal about how our culture regards the female sex. Consider, for example, stock phrases such as *women and children* *first,* or *wine, women, and song.* Less proverbial but no less significant classifications have been offered by various prominent individuals in recent years. For instance, former President Nathan Pusey of Harvard is reputed to have lamented the draining effect of the draft on male brainpower at the university with the words, "We shall be left with *the blind, the lame and the women.*"[7]

Examples like these are not difficult to find. The question is, what do these groupings imply about the kind of people women are considered to be? For us, at least, the implication is that women are immature (like children), frivolous (to be indulged in for entertainment purposes, like wine and song), and handicapped (like the blind and the lame). Singly or in combination, these presumed female attributes provide a convenient excuse for not taking women seriously; they serve to trivialize the female sex.

This trivialization effect appears elsewhere in the language as well. Lakoff has pointed out, for example, "that if, in a particular sentence, both *woman* and *lady* might be used, the use of the latter tends to trivialize the subject matter under discussion, often subtly ridiculing the woman involved." The expressions *lady atheist* (which appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle,* January 31, 1972) and *lady sculptor,* with their connotations of eccentricity and frivolousness, are cited as cases in point.[8]

Similar in effect to the substitution of *lady* for *woman* is the common practice of referring to adult females as *girls.* Although it is probably true that the suggestion of youth is in some sense a desirable one in our youth-oriented culture, it is also true that the association carries certain decidedly negative connotations—irresponsibility, immaturity, "smallness" of body or mind, etc. What is associated with youth tends to lack stature, and therefore importance, almost by definition.

The parallel terms for men, *gentlemen* and *boys,* can have the same sort of trivializing effect, as in *gentleman scholar,* for example. However, the issue here is one of frequency. Males are referred to as *boys* or *gentlemen* much less often than females are called *girls* or *ladies.*[9]

Woman in Terms of Man

The English language also has a tendency to define women as a sort of male appendage. A woman's linguistic existence is in many cases expressed in essentially male terms, from a male point of view, and/or with male interests in mind. One example of this tendency is the fact that many of the nouns that refer to women performing various activities or roles are linguistically marked as derivatives of the basic (male) form. Thus we have poet*ess* and actr*ess,* songstr*ess,* steward*ess,* usher*ette,* and major*ette,* not to mention proper names such as Jeannette and Henriette. Only in matters of marriage and the few, female-dominated professions is the female form the primary one. Thus we have widow*er,* *male* nurse, and *male* prostitute.

Another way in which English tends to classify women in essentially male terms is in social titles that make the declaration of a woman's marital status, i.e., her relationship to a man, obligatory. Until very recently, women had no choice but to reveal whether they were single or (ever) married every time they wanted to refer to themselves in the conventional title-plus-last-name manner. A woman was either *Miss* Somebody-or-other, or *Mrs.* Somebody-or-other.[10] Now, of course, one can be *Ms.* Somebody-or-other and supposedly avoid the whole issue. However, the use of *Ms.* is still often interpreted to mean "unmarried, and slightly ashamed of the fact." As one writer reports, "After four attempts to convince a travel agent that I was not 'Miss' or 'Mrs.' but 'Ms.,' she finally responded with 'Oh, I'm not married either, but it doesn't bother me.' "[11]

One of the more subtle ways in which the English language represents the female as a derivative, or subset, of the male is by means of the linguistic convention known as "generic man." In English, the same word that is used to refer to male human beings is also used in the generic sense to refer to all human beings: that word is, of course, *man.* English grammar books assure us that persons of both sexes are meant to be included in expressions like *man, the hunter, the man in the street, good-will to men, all men are created equal,* etc. But is this really the case? If *man* is really generic, why is there something decidely funny about the sentence, "My brother married a spaceman who works for NASA"?[12] Furthermore, as Graham is quick to point out, any woman encountering "a threshold marked 'Men Only,' . . . knows that the admonition is not intended to bar animals or plants or inanimate objects. It is meant for her."[13]

That generic man is not always quite what he appears to be is particularly well-illustrated by the following incident: At the end of one of the hour-long segments of Jacob Bronowski's highly acclaimed TV series, "The Ascent of Man," "the host of the series chatted for a few minutes with a guest anthropologist about what women were doing during this early period in the ascent of man."[14]

The same generic principle that makes *man* both male and female is supposed to apply to pronouns as well. We have all been taught that the third person singular pronoun *he* is both masculine and sex-indefinite. But again, if this is true, shouldn't the following statement sound perfectly natural: "No person may require another person to perform, participate in, or undergo an abortion against his will"?[15]

Experimental evidence of the male bias in generic *man* has been provided by recent research. Joseph W. Schneider and Sally L. Hacker, two sociologists at Drake University, asked college students to submit photographs that they considered appropriate illustrations for the various chapters of an introductory sociology textbook. One group of students was given a list of chapter titles in which the generic term was not used (e.g., "Culture," "Family," "Urban Life," "Political Life," "Social Life"). Another group was given a list in which some of the titles had been changed to read "Urban Man," "Political Man," "Social Man," etc. Results showed that

> for a significantly large number of students, the generic "man" is not, apparently, generically interpreted. Among all respondents, about 64% of those students receiving "man-linked" labels submitted pictures containing males only; whereas only about half of those receiving labels without the term submitted male-only pictures for the five labels.[16]

This study offers clear evidence that, despite what the grammar books tell us, in actual usage generic *man* does not apply equally to men and women but rather suggests that the person being referred to is male.

All this is not to say, however, that generic terms are never interpreted generically. Grammar book definitions and years of English composition classes have presumably had some impact, and sentences such as the following may well be taken as referring to both sexes:

1. Man the lifeboats!

2. A dog is man's best friend.

3. Each student should pick up his paper upon entering the room.

The point is that this acceptance of the generic sense exacerbates, rather than solves, the problem. Because *man* is both generic and nongeneric, women find themselves caught in a linguistic contradiction of rather formidable proportions: they discover that they are being defined as both *man* and *not man* at the same time.[17] Precisely because the word is used to mean both male people and people in general, to the extent that women are *included* under the rubric of *man,* they lose their "linguistic identity" as women. By the same token, not to be included under that rubric amounts, linguistically speaking, to being defined out of the human race. The generic *man* convention sets up a linguistic structure whereby women can be portrayed in English *either* as women *or* as people, but not both.

Finally, we note that the practice of excluding females from human groups that are supposedly made up of people of both sexes is not limited to the generic *man* case alone. Miller and Swift supply us with sobering evidence in a quote from a television commentator: "People won't give up power. They'll give up anything else first—money, home, wife, children—but not power."[18]

Implications and Consequences (or, So What?)

How does all this affect the way women live in the world? There are two views of the relationship of language to society and its effect on society. Some people maintain that the relationship between language and society is one of representation only. According to this view, language serves as a social mirror, reflecting the implicit values, attitudes, and prejudices of the society in which it is embedded but having no power to influence the perceptions and/or interactions of the people in that society. From this argument it follows that, while the picture the English language paints of women may be distasteful to us, it has no real effect on the way women think and feel about themselves or the way they lead their lives.

A considerable number of people disagree with this position, however. They maintain that language not only reflects social values, attitudes, etc., but also reinforces them. In any language, it is easier to talk about some things than others. We have seen, for example, that many of the words that English offers for referring to women also have sexual connotations. Thus, the language makes it easy to talk about women in a sexual way and provides the basis for the formation of a habit.

With the habit of talking about things in certain ways comes the habit of thinking about them in those ways. Thus, the language-based predisposition to talk about women in sexual terms makes it more likely that a speaker will think about them in those terms. This lends additional support to the well-known tendency to view women as "sex objects." It is in this sense, then, that language may be said to reinforce, as well as reflect, prevailing social opinion.

One implication of this argument is that the ability of language to reinforce the status quo helps to perpetuate sexist attitudes and practices and inhibit social change. Another implication is that, according to this theory, women are likely to come to "see themselves as the language sees them." If the tendency to talk about things in certain ways leads to the tendency to think about them in those ways, it follows that women speaking the English language will be encouraged to view themselves as sex objects, as trivial, as ambivalent about their status as complete human beings, etc. It seems fairly clear that the net result of either or both possibilities is to help "keep women in their place."

FEMALE AND MALE DIFFERENCES IN USAGE

Just as there are differences in the words that refer to women and men so are there differences in the ways that women and men talk. In English the same words, the same grammatical forms, and the same conversational strategies can be and are used by both women and men. However, the frequency of the usage of these words and strategies and the situations in which they are used differ depending on the speaker's and listener's sex.[19] The next sections describe examples of these differences and how they relate to control and dominance in verbal interaction.

Sex Roles and Speaking "Proper" English

In the society at large, the manner in which some people talk is more "prestigious" than the way others do. In the United States, like other countries, it is generally the language of the urban, well-educated, and wealthier speakers that is held in higher esteem. Their upper-class speech is the most acceptable and carries the label *Standard English.* It is this standard language that is taught in schools and used by broadcasters and newspaper reporters.

The acknowledged existence of a standard language would lead us to expect that speakers of English would equally strive to speak this more esteemed style in an effort to sound more like those who have prestige. However, one of the most consistent findings of those who have studied sex-based variations in English has been that women, no matter what their socioeconomic level, race, or age, use more grammatically correct forms than men and pronounce words in more acceptable ways. This means that they succeed in sounding more like Standard English speakers than men do.

Trudgill, in a study of Norwich English (a form of British English), found that there, too, women used prestigious speech forms more often than men.[20] He also found that, when speakers were asked about their use of standard and nonstandard forms, differences between actual and perceived behavior appeared. It seems that speakers "perceive their own speech in terms of the norms at which they were aiming rather than the sound actually produced,"[21] so that there were always cases of overreporting and underreporting of actual usages. These instances were strongly correlated with sex differences no matter what the class of the speaker. Women claimed that they used standard forms more frequently than they actually did, and men reported that they used them less frequently than they actually did.

As Trudgill convincingly argues, the *actual* speech differences between female and male speech, combined with the differences in reporting, indicate that women and men identify with different role models and seek to talk like these models.

One explanation of the correctness of women's speech is presented by Thorne and Henley.[22] They point to research by Goffman[23] demonstrating that inferior status leads to careful and circumscribed behavior. They claim that women's usage of Standard English is an example of this circumscribed behavior. A related argument is presented in Trudgill.[24] He characterizes women as "status conscious." Thus, he says, they act in ways that will improve their status. They seize on language as a way to do this, because women's only readily available sources of prestige are those that have to do with appearance. However, it is questionable whether the use of correct speech truly has the effect of improving women's position in society.

What of the male usage of less standard forms? Why does behaving like a man mean using lower-class speech? One explanation is that the prevalent socialization of males includes a male sex role of competitiveness, independence, and toughness, and working-class males are thought of as embodying these characteristics. Speaking the less acceptable or nonstandard language associated with working-class males then becomes a way for all males to be tough and independent.

Related to women's use of the more esteemed language forms, as part of women's circumscribed behavior, is the difference in the frequency of swearing in female and male speech. Swearing is a way of shocking and antagonizing others in addition to being a way to release anger. Not only is its usage more frequent in the speech of males, but also many of the terms used for swearing, such as *son of a bitch,* vilify women. Most men consider swearing improper in female speech, and Jespersen, a well-known linguist, also claims that women themselves may object to it.[25] If women do swear they tend to limit themselves to milder terms, such as *shit, hell,* and *damn.*[26] Personal observation of the rather strong reactions that can occur when a woman curses—dropped jaws, expressions of digust, heads turning aside in horror—testify to the fact that it is still a strongly tabooed behavior for women.

Weakness and Women's Speech

It has been claimed that certain language patterns used more frequently by women make their speech sound weak or emotional. Examples are the use of fillers and hesitation markers, such as *ah, well,* and *um-m-m;* the use of hedges, such as *I think, you know,* and *I guess;* the use of intensifiers, such as *very;* the use of tag questions at the ends of statements, such as "It's a nice day, *isn't it*"; and the use of direct quotes, when reporting others' speech, rather than summaries of it. However, attempts to verify these claims with actual studies of language use have led to some unexpected results.

Dubois and Crouch[27] did a study of the use of tag questions, which Lakoff[28] and others had argued were used by women to weaken assertions. However, the Dubois and Crouch data on participants in an academic discussion did not corroborate this claim. In their sample, men used tag questions more, perhaps to make a question sound more like an assertion, so as not to appear uninformed, thus conveying the opposite effect of what Lakoff had suggested.

A second study of Erickson, Lind, Johnson, and O'Barr[29] on the use of such forms in the testimony of courtroom witnesses found that all these forms were used by men as well as women, and some were used even more by men than by women. The Erickson group's study did verify that such patterns of speech are, indeed, judged to be a sign of weakness, whether a male or a female used them. In the Erickson group's experiment, all witnesses using the speech patterns were rated lower on characteristics such as assertiveness, competence, believability, and intelligence.

In spite of these findings, the use of such patterns is regularly attributed to women.[30] Why does this discrepancy persist between research results and beliefs? There is always the possibility that women really do employ these forms more frequently, but in contexts that the researchers have failed to capture. However, it is also possible that, because many people continue to regard women as the weaker sex, they assume that women use weaker speech forms, and any utterance of such patterns by women only confirms their beliefs. Where does this leave women? Does it mean that women's speech will always be considered weak, just because a woman is speaking? This is an unsettling thought. What can women do to counteract these stereotypes? One recommendation is that women learn to monitor their utterances as much as possible to reduce such forms in appropriate situations.

Another attribute of women's speech that is associated with weakness concerns voice quality or intonation. Intonation can be viewed as a musical scale, with a high point (note), a low point (note), and steps (notes) in between. Women's intonation range is wider than men's, sometimes giving what is interpreted as an emotional, and therefore weak, quality to the voice. This characterization comes about because large fluctuations in voice level can be used to convey emotion. Being emotional is a devalued behavior in our society. An additional difference in women's and men's intonation patterns is that women use more patterns that end at higher levels, as intonation patterns for questions do, thus giving a hesitant quality to their speech. Men rarely use these ending patterns.[31]

Differences in Conversational Strategies and Their Effect on Women

Another category of linguistic behavior that is relevant for understanding women's position in our society is conversational interaction. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson[32] refer to conversation as a system that is "party administered" and "interactionally managed." This means that speech exchanges are under the control of the individuals participating in them, and the interaction that arises is a consequence of the relationship between the speakers. It is not unexpected, then, that the disparate statuses of females and males in our society show in these exchanges.

Interruptions. One characteristic of conversations is speaker-change or "turn-taking." A speaker signals the finish of her or his turn in various ways: making eye contact, lowering the voice level, or calling on someone else to take over. The general strategy in conversations is for the listener to wait for one of these signals and then start talking. However, there is another way to gain the floor—to interrupt.[33] This is considered impolite; however, as we found earlier, where proper speech behavior is concerned, women and men act differently.

Zimmerman and West, in a study of two-person conversations between twenty white, college-educated people twenty to thirty years old,[34] found that in same-sex conversations (ten female/female and ten male/male), interruptions were about the same. These break-ins occurred in about 15 percent of the conversations. However, in mixed-sex conversations (eleven of them) this picture changed radically. Interruptions turned up in 99 percent of the conversations, and, except for two instances in one conversation, males were the interrupting parties. This extremely large difference in the frequency of interruptions in same-sex versus mixed-sex exchanges and the sex disparity of the interrupters suggest different motivations in the two cases. In same-sex exchanges, Zimmerman and West conclude that interruptions are idiosyncratic. However, we feel they may also be related to the parties' emotional involvement in the exchange. While these factors may affect interactions between the sexes as well, interruptions in mixed-sex exchanges also seem to be a systematic strategy to limit women's access to conversation. Moreover, this pattern is parallel to the interruptions found in adult–child interactions, where it is overwhelmingly the adult who interrupts the child.[35]

Selective reinforcement. Women and men also handle the role of listener differently. A listener is expected to signal attentiveness in any of several ways: head nodding, interjecting expressions such as *right, um-hmm,* or making more extensive verbal comments. Inadequate response from a listener can bring about a cessation in the exchange or at least a question such as "Are you listening?"

Evidence that men listen differently from women is reported by Fishman[36] and Hirschman.[37] Both found that males use significantly fewer interjections such as *um-hmm* than females, in both same-sex and mixed-sex verbal exchanges.[38] This lack of reinforcement by males can be seen as part of the competitive style of the male sex role. In conversations, this competitive style is manifested by attempts to dominate the exchange. One way of accomplishing this is by interrupting. Another way is by giving only limited reinforcement. As Aries reports in her data on all-male, small group interactions,[39] rather than encouraging each other, males concern themselves with establishing a hierarchy. They accomplish this by "brain picking" to see who knows the most, by telling jokes at each other's expense, and by telling stories about such physically threatening topics as castration and riots. It is easy to see how this difference in the use of reinforcers could make a woman, used to a supportive interaction style with other women, feel off-balance in mixed-sex interactions.

Another male strategy is to make a minimal or delayed response in an exchange. Speakers can infer from such a response that the listener thinks what they have to say is of little interest; they may then switch topics in an effort to engage the listener. In the data collected by Zimmerman and West, this was the effect in three of the ten mixed-sex exchanges.[40] These results suggest that males use the strategy at least partially as a way to control the topic by changing it to one on which they can talk freely.

Amount of talk. Another difference between women and men in conversations is the length of the turn at talking. We all know the stereotypes of the talkative woman and the strong, silent man. However, data from a variety of sources invalidate these stereotypes. The finding is generally that men talk longer during their turns than women. This substantially larger volume of speech affords them a dominant position in an interaction. For example, Aries found that in mixed-sex groups the men initiated 66 percent of the conversations compared to 34 percent for women, and those who initiated talk were also the ones who took up more of the available time for talk and were considered leaders by the others. Men were also the recipients of more of the talk; the women in the groups oriented their remarks toward the men, rather than the other women, and drew the men out.[41] Indeed, the "talkative" woman may be one who talks as much or nearly as much as a man.[42]

CONCLUSION

A few years ago the principal question being asked by those who recognized and objected to sexism in the English language was, can it be changed? Is it in fact possible to legislate the changes necessary to wipe out language's sexist bias? This question is now well on its way to being answered affirmatively. In an attempt to eliminate sexist references to women, many changes have been proposed and are in use. Best known among them are the still controversial *Ms.;* sex indefinite substitutes such as sales*person*, mail *carrier*, spokes*person*, and *human*kind, for the ambiguous generic *man* constructions; and substitutes for generic *he* such as extension of the use of *they* to the singular, the alternation of *she or he* with *he or she*, and the newly coined *s/he*.

Some of these proposed changes are already becoming institutionalized. Since the publication of the *American Heritage School Dictionary* in 1972 (the first of its kind to be made up of definitions and sample sentences premeditatedly nonsexist in nature), efforts to eliminate sexism from the country's reading matter have grown steadily in number and proportion. Major textbook publishers have distributed guidelines to their authors and editors, encouraging them to use only nonsexist language in their writing and providing specific examples of how to do this. Library catalogers are calling for the eradication of sexism in both the language and the concepts of card cataloging systems, while various religious organizations are in the process of rewording the texts of materials used in their services.[43]

Along with these institutional efforts, the ongoing, day-to-day struggle of individual women to combat sexist language must be recognized. For example, more and more women are refusing to be called, or to call themselves, *girls*. These efforts are all the more praiseworthy because they are often undertaken knowing that one result may be personal discomfort from ridicule by some people.

The attack on the problems that women encounter in their use of language is also well underway at both institutional and personal levels. For example, there are more and more assertiveness training groups that have as goals (but not often presented as such) changing the kinds of linguistic habits that we have described in this article. These groups are forming in all kinds of settings, from large corporations to informal workshops. In addition, an increasing number of articles in popular magazines and books describe sex differences in communication and assertive verbal behavior.[44] These publications often suggest how to break the patterns of male-dominated conversations and how to monitor the use of forms associated with "weak" and "hesitant" speech.

The fact that many such changes are actually underway, however, only gives rise to another, equally important question: Will the eradication of sexism in the English language help eliminate it from other parts of society? The answer is yes. Language does, indeed, have the power to influence other parts of society; it can reinforce the status quo, or it can work to facilitate change. An awareness of sexist language is essential for understanding the traditional rules of interaction between women and men. Once we know these rules, we can work to modify them, to defy them, and to use them to our own advantage. Men and women can only benefit from the eradication of sexism in the English language.

NOTES

1. This article does not include information on the relationships between women and language in other societies, and what is true of English may not necessarily be true of other languages. Also, most of the data on usage that we describe are for white middle- and upper-class speakers. Descriptions of the interaction styles of other groups, such as Mexican-Americans and Blacks, are lacking in the sources available to us.
2. Robin Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 29. The extent to which the original meaning of *mistress* is still in use is open to question. Lakoff, for example, argues that the word is "practically restricted to its sexual sense." On the other hand, one of the present authors maintains that she quite comfortably refers to herself as mistress of her pet dog and cat. Also Betty Lou Dubois and Isabel Crouch, in their article "The Question of Tag Questions in Women's Speech: They Don't Really Use More of Them, Do They?" *Language in Society*, 4 (1975), 289–94, criticize Lakoff's work and include the following quotes in which the word is used in a nonsexual sense:

   "It was not that she would make any demonstration; she just did not want to be looked at when she was not quite *mistress* of herself." O. LaFarge, *Laughing Boy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927, reprinted 1957). (Italics added.)

   "The walls are full of pictures of famous people, from President Nixon to President Sadat of Egypt, all of them autographed to the *mistress* of the house—former movie star Shirley Temple Black." P. J. Oppenheimer, "Shirley Temple Black Talks about Her Times of Tears, Her Times of Triumph," *Family Weekly*, Nov. 1974, pp. 9–11. (Italics added.)
3. Laurel Richardson Walum, *The Dynamics of Sex and Gender: A Sociological Perspective* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1977), 18. Walum also notes that the same word can have both sexual and nonsexual meanings, depending on whether it is used to refer to a male or to a female. She points out that "a male *tramp* is simply a hobo but a female *tramp* is a slut." Ibid.
4. A *whoremonger*, according to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English*

Language Unabridged (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Co., 1966), 2612, is an archaic term meaning "a man consorting with whores or given to lechery," and its synonyms are *whoremaster* and *fornicator*.

5. Muriel R. Schulz, "The Semantic Derogation of Women," in Barrie Thorne and Nancy Henley, eds., *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1975), 64–75.
6. Ibid., 66–68.
7. This example appears in Mary Ritchie Key, *Male/Female Language* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1975), 82.
8. Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place*, 23.
9. What is more likely to happen, we think, is that men will be referred to as *guys*, rather than *boys*—a term that seems distinctly less trivializing somehow. This could be one reason why young women seem so often to refer to each other as *guys* as well.
10. Even more striking in this regard is the fact that a woman is expected to take her husband's name upon marriage, so that she becomes not only *Mrs.* Somebody-or-other, but *Mrs. John* Somebody-or-other. Related also is the familiar practice of referring to a married couple as *man and wife*, now rapidly becoming obsolete.
11. Walum, *The Dynamics of Sex and Gender*, 19 n. 2.
12. This example originally appeared in A. P. Nilsen, "Grammatical Gender and Its Relationship to the Equal Treatment of Males and Females in Children's Books" (Ph.D. diss., College of Education in the Graduate College, University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1973), 86–87. We discovered it in Casey Miller and Kate Swift, *Words and Women* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976), 29.
13. Alma Graham, "The Making of a Non-Sexist Dictionary," in Thorne and Henley, eds., *Language and Sex*, 62.
14. Miller and Swift, *Words and Women*, 20.
15. This example appears in Key, *Male/Female Language*, 89. It is interesting to note that *he* has not always been considered the correct third-person pronoun for referring to a single human being of indeterminate sex. Until about the eighteenth century, the correct choice of a pronoun for such a purpose was *they* or *he or she*. It was only when certain eighteenth-century grammarians decided that there was something inherently plural about *they*, and so prescribed a substitute for use in the singular, that our present generic *he* was born. Ann Bodine, "Androcentrism in Prescriptive Grammar: Singular 'They,' Sex-Indefinite 'He,' and 'He or She,'" *Language in Society*, 4 (Aug. 1975), 129–46.
16. Joseph W. Schneider and Sally W. Hacker, "Sex Role Imagery and Use of Generic 'Man' in Introductory Texts: A Case in the Sociology of Sociology," *American Sociologist*, 8 (Feb. 1973), 12–18. Other interesting articles on this topic are Wendy Martyna, "What Does 'He' Mean?" *Journal of Communication*, winter 1978, 131–38, and S. L. Bem and D. J. Bem, "Does Sex-biased Job Advertising 'Aid and Abet' Sex Discrimination?" *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 3 (1973), 6–18, which describes the devastating effect of generic *man* and sex-specific job descriptions on women's and men's interest in job advertisements.
17. Note that this same contradictory quality could also conceivably serve as a convenient way of covering up the exclusion of women. One can always claim to be using *man* in the generic sense, whether one actually is or not. Thus the ambiguity inherent in the meaning and the usage of the word *man* effectively turns it into yet another weapon in the arsenal of those who have an interest, for whatever reason, in keeping women in the social backwaters and out of the mainstream.
18. The late Frank McGee on the "Today Show," NBC-TV, June 19, 1972, quoted in Miller and Swift, *Words and Women*, 37.
19. While this article focuses on speech differences that vary according to sex, the way

people talk is affected by numerous other considerations, for example: socioeconomic level—including education and occupation; the speaker's age; how well the speaker knows the listener; the topic discussed; the place of the conversation—such as a church or the speaker's own house; the method of communication—such as writing versus speaking; the speaker's personality; and the linguistic form used.

20. Peter Trudgill, "Sex, Covert Prestige and Linguistic Change in the Urban British English of Norwich," *Language in Society*, 1 (1972), 179–95, reprinted in Thorne and Henley, eds., *Language and Sex*, 88–104.
21. William Labov, *The Social Stratification of English in New York City* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1966), 455.
22. Barrie Thorne and Nancy Henley, "Difference and Dominance: An Overview of Language, Gender and Society," in Thorne and Henley, eds., *Language and Sex*, 17–18.
23. Erving Goffman, "The Nature of Deference and Demeanor," *American Anthropologist*, 58 (1956), 473–502, reprinted in Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), 47–95.
24. Trudgill, "Sex, Covert Prestige and Linguistic Change," 191–92.
25. Otto Jespersen, *Language, Its Nature, Development and Origin* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1922), chap. 11, 237–54.
26. L. A. Bailey and L. A. Timm, "More on Women's—and Men's—Expletives," *Anthropological Linguistics*, 18, no. 9 (1976), 438–49.
27. Dubois and Crouch, "The Question of Tag Questions."
28. Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place*, 14–17.
29. B. Erickson, E. A. Lind, B. C. Johnson, and W. M. O'Barr, *Speech Style and Impression Formation in a Court Setting: The Effects of "Power" and "Powerless" Speech*, Law and Language Project Research Report no. 13 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University, 1977).
30. Philip M. Smith, "Sex Markers in Speech," in K. R. Scherer and H. Giles, eds., *Social Markers in Speech* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 134–37.
31. For further discussion of this, see Ruth Brend, "Male–Female Intonation Patterns in American English," in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Phonetic Sciences, 1971* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), 866–69, reprinted in Thorne and Henley, eds., *Language and Sex*, 84–87.
32. Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson, "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-taking in Conversation," *Language*, 50, no. 4 (1974), 696–735.
33. Interrupting is different from overlapping another's speech. Overlaps are instances in which the listener starts before the speaker has concluded, but the new speaker begins at or nearly at a signaled transition point. Interruptions do not occur at signaled transition points for speaker alternation and therefore are disruptions.
34. Donald Zimmerman and Candace West, "Sex Roles, Interruptions and Silences in Conversation," in Thorne and Henley, eds., *Language and Sex*, 105–29.
35. Candace West and Donald Zimmerman, "Women's Place in Everyday Talk: Reflections on Parent–Child Interaction," *Social Problems*, 24, no. 5 (June 1977), 521–29.
36. Pamela Fishman, "Interactional Shitwork," *Heresies*, 2 (May 1977), pp. 99–101.
37. Lynette Hirschman, "Analysis of Support and Assertive Behavior in Conversations" (Paper presented at the summer meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, July 1974).
38. It is interesting that, in mixed-sex exchanges, Hirschman found that both sexes use support forms less than when they are in same-sex situations. This is an indication that conversations do not flow as easily across sex boundaries.
39. Elizabeth Aries, "Interaction Patterns and Themes of Males, Females, and Mixed Groups," *Small Group Behavior*, 7, no. 1 (1976), 1–18.

40. Zimmerman and West, "Sex Roles, Interruptions and Silences," 124. The article refers to only ten mixed-sex exchanges here, although earlier it referred to eleven.

41. Aries, "Interaction Patterns and Themes," 12–15.

42. For discussions on the effect of topic, participants, and setting on who dominates talk, see Smith, "Sex Markers in Speech," 109–46, and Carole Edelsky, "Who's Got the Floor?" *Language in Society,* 10 (Dec. 1981), 383–421.

43. Miller and Swift, *Words and Women,* 145–47.

44. Among such publications are Gloria Steinem, "The Politics of Talking in Groups," *Ms.*, May 1981, 43; Lynn Bloom, Karen Coburn, and Joan Pearlman, *The New Assertive Woman* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1975); and B. W. Eakins and R. G. Eakins, *Sex Differences in Human Communication* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1975).

KATHLEEN SHORTRIDGE

Poverty is a woman's problem

The odds that people will be poor at some point in their lives are twice as great if they are female than if they are male. Almost two-thirds of the impoverished adults in the United States are women.[1] The female poor are composed of a number of different but overlapping groups: the working poor, the welfare poor, poor mothers with their poor children, poor blacks, browns, and other racial minorities, and the elderly poor. Women with a second disability, race as well as sex, or age as well as sex, are more likely to be poor than other women. However, 52 percent of poor adult women are white and under age sixty-five. Thus, even without added disabilities, women have difficulty in obtaining an adequate income. This article addresses two questions: Who are the female poor, and why are they in poverty?

WHO ARE THE POOR WOMEN?

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the men, women, and children who are poor. Of the 18,462,000 females who live in poverty, approximately 34 percent are under the age of eighteen, and another 15 percent are elderly, over sixty-five. There are 9,460,000 working-age adult women under sixty-five who live in poverty. This represents 13.2 percent of the working-age adult women in the United States.

Most people have a general idea of who the poor are. Blacks and other racial minorities are likely to be poor. Elderly people are disproportionately among the poor. People who are not employed, people on welfare, and workers in low-wage jobs are also poor. However, within each of these groups and in the society as a whole, most of the poor are women.

Race, Sex, and Poverty

The question of whether identifying women's poverty as an issue simply diverts attention from the severe poverty of blacks and other racial minorities is a serious one. The fact is, however, that both variables, race and sex, contribute independently to the poverty equation. The black woman, with two strikes against her, is

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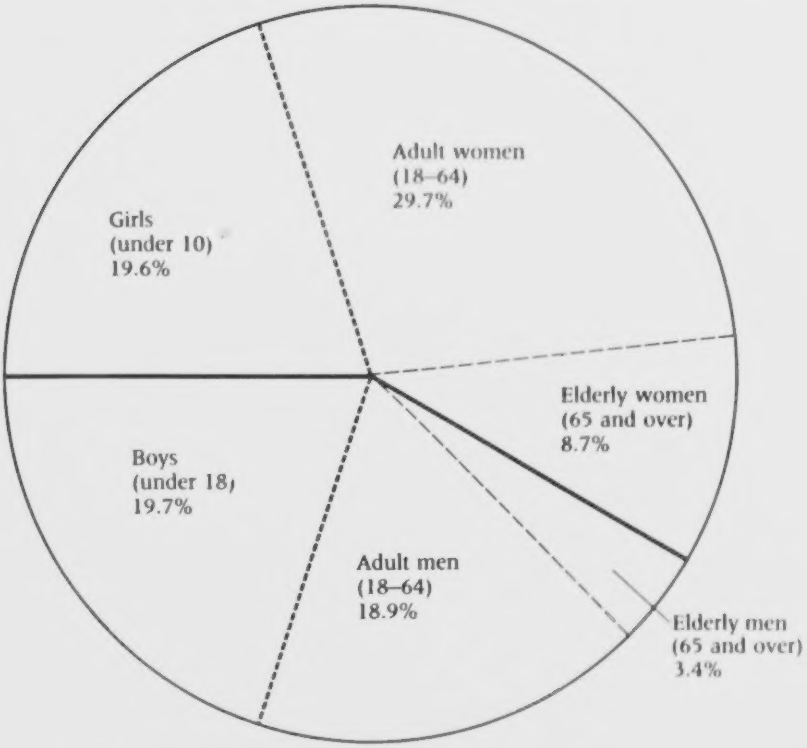
FIGURE 1 Poverty profile, 1981: 31,822,000 Americans below the poverty line



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Characteristics of the Population below the Poverty Level: 1981," *Current Population Reports*, Consumer Income Series P–60, no. 138, Mar. 1983, table 11.

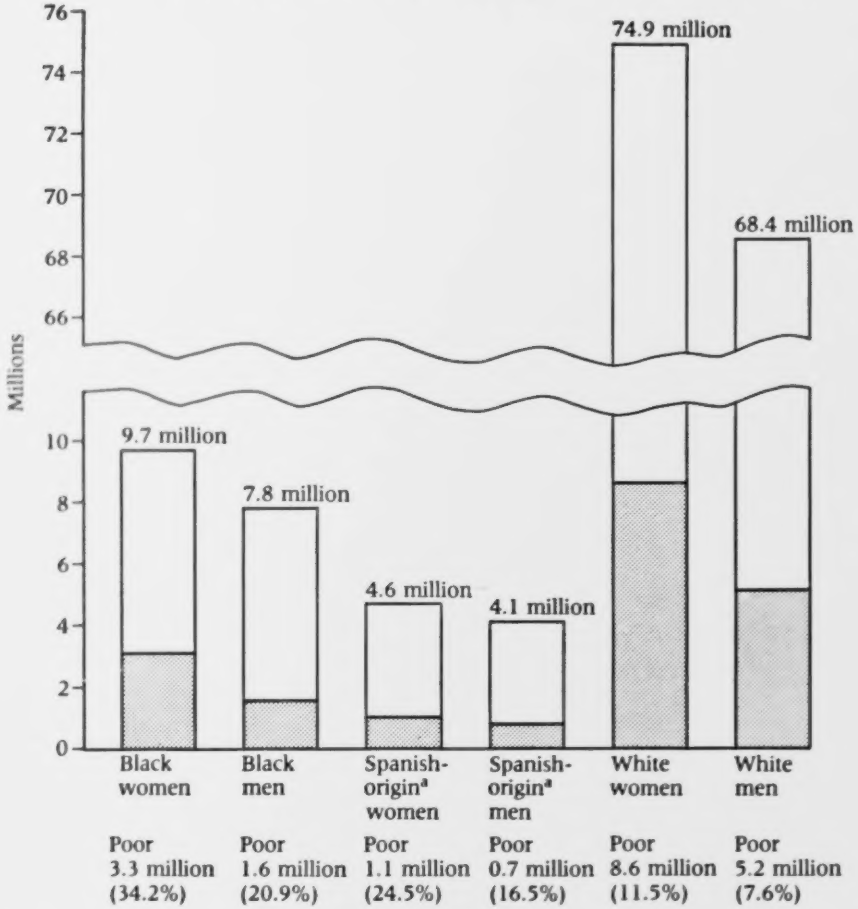
much more likely to be poor than is a member of any other group. Approximately 3,308,000 of the 12,232,000 poor adult women in the country are black.

Figure 2 indicates that blacks are somewhat more likely to be in poverty than people of Spanish origin (who might be black or white) and far more likely to be in poverty than whites. Within each ethnic group, approximately two-thirds of the poor are women. In fact, the rate of female poverty among blacks is slightly higher than it is in the other groups; 67.0 percent of poor black adults are women, compared to 62.5 percent of poor white adults. Obtaining economic security for these women and their children is a pressing concern for the black community and the wider society.[2]

Age, Sex, and Poverty

Like minority women, elderly women are very much overrepresented in the poverty population. Many are widowed and lose their husbands' earnings and pensions. Many retire from their own jobs and reap the bitter harvest of a lifetime

FIGURE 2 Total adult population and poverty population by race and sex, 1981



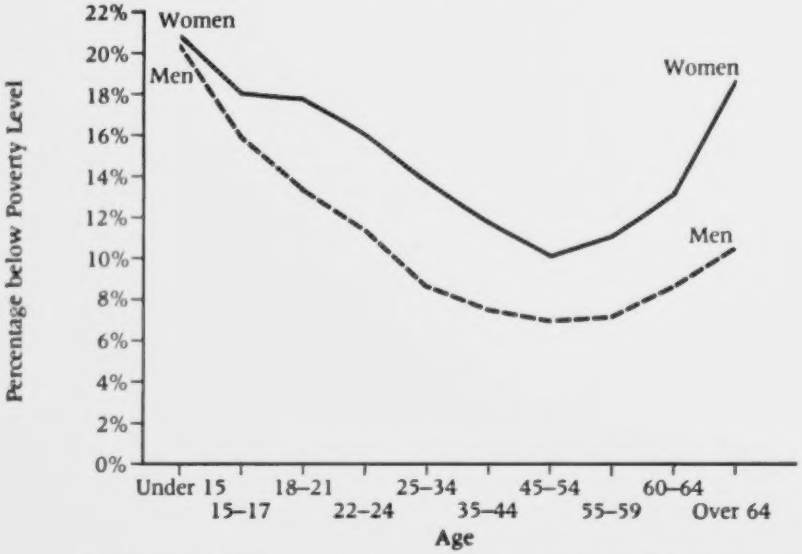
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Characteristics of the Population below the Poverty Level: 1981," *Current Population Reports*, Consumer Income Series P–60, no. 138, Mar. 1983, table 11.

[a] Spanish origin includes both blacks and whites.

of low earnings—no retirement benefits, no savings. The elderly comprise 11.1 percent of the population but 12.1 percent of the poor. Of these, 72.0 percent are female. For women, the poverty rate is near its highest point in old age.

For men, the pattern is different. While the poverty rate does rise for men over sixty and especially over sixty-five, this is not their time of greatest poverty, as figure 3 indicates. For men, the period with the highest rate of poverty is childhood, the time when males are most likely to be dependent on the income of women.

FIGURE 3 Proportion below poverty level by age and sex



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Characteristics of the Population below the Poverty Level: 1981," *Current Population Reports*, Consumer Income Series P–60, no. 138, Mar. 1983, table 11.

Welfare, Sex, and Poverty

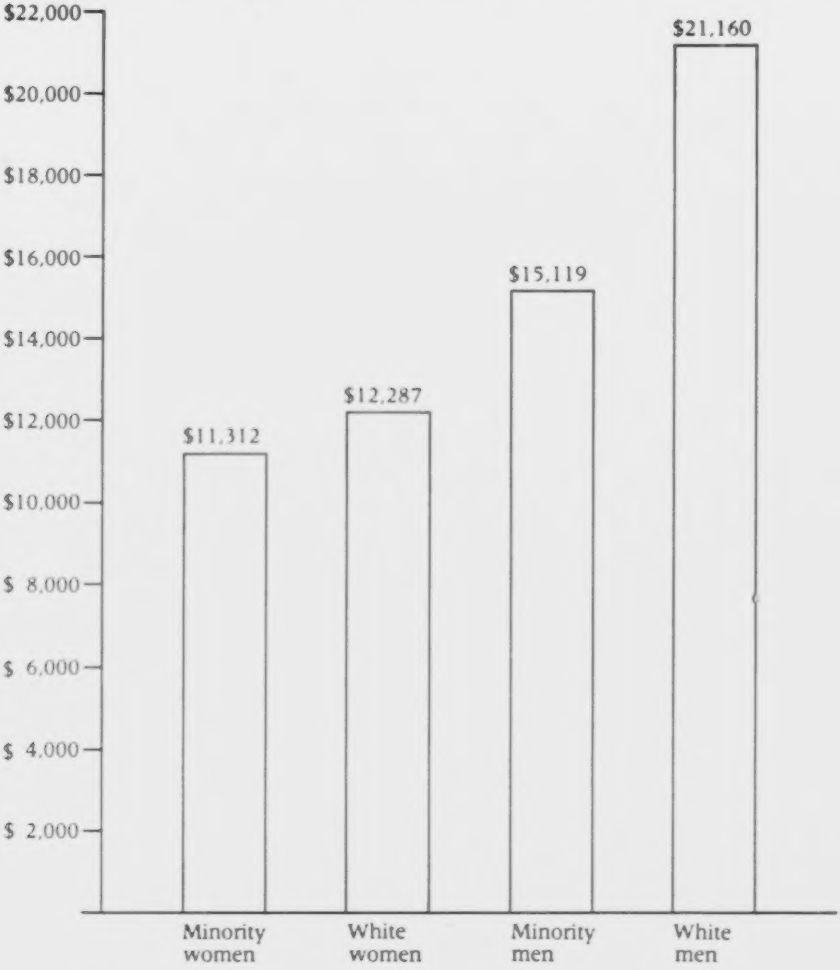
Isn't poverty the problem that welfare programs, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), were designed to cure? Well, yes and no. Welfare may ease but it does not solve the problem of poverty. Even before the Reagan budget cuts, no state in the country provided AFDC payments above the poverty level; payments ranged from 45 percent to 94 percent of the poverty level. Between one-fourth and one-third of women on welfare also work, but they still do not receive enough income to raise themselves above the poverty level.[3]

As of December 1980, there were 3,842,000 families receiving AFDC, roughly 12 percent of the families with children under the age of eighteen. About 70 percent were female-headed families. In only 13 percent was the father present; in another 13 percent a grandparent was the householder; and the remainder were headed by various other relatives or nonrelatives.[4]

Low-Wage Work, Sex, and Poverty

Employment is the classic solution to men's poverty, but women's work is different. Working women compose a significant portion of the female poor. Women are certainly in the work force. In 1980, there were 43 million working women, constituting 40 percent of all workers. Only one-fourth are part-time workers, and most women seeking jobs are seeking full-time work. Many have children: 55 percent of mothers with children under eighteen work, and 45

FIGURE 4 Median wage and salary income for full-time, year-round workers, 1981



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, *20 Facts on Women Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), 1–3.

percent of mothers with preschoolers do.[5] The problem is that, although women are working, they are not earning much, as figure 4 shows. The average full-time year-round woman worker receives less than 60 percent of the median man's income.

Women's low income is primarily attibutable to occupational segregation, with women concentrated in low-wage occupations. Women cluster in the jobs characterized by the U.S. Department of Labor as clerical, service, and operative jobs. Some 70 percent of working women are in these three groups. Women make up 80 percent of clerical workers, and the average earnings for this full-time, year-around work is $11,755. They make up 63 percent of retail sales workers, with average full-time, year-around earnings of $11,238. They are 62 percent of service workers—custodians, nurse's aides, cafeteria workers, etc.—whose average full-time, year-around earnings are $8,310. In some women's jobs, the situation is even worse. The average full-time, year-around private household worker (domestic) earns $5,134, and the average full-time, year-around female farmworker earns $2,030. In 1981, the poverty level for a family of four was $9,287.

Jobs are an answer to poverty, but "women's work" is not. Work in occupations that traditionally employ women is plagued not only by low pay but also by high unemployment, long periods of unemployment, little overtime, few benefits, and no union protection. Opportunities for advancement are scarce. Even when women are not working in a female-dominated field, they tend to earn far less than men in their field, In sales, for example, women earn on the average 52 percent of what men earn.

Female Heads of Households

Low income, stemming from inadequate wages, welfare payments, or retirement funds, is enough to keep many women hovering at the edge of poverty. But low income is only half of the poverty equation; the expense of supporting families is the other half.

The number of families in poverty increased by 1,825,000, to 6,830,000, between 1969 and 1981. The increase is largely attributable to the increase in the number of female-headed poverty-level families. The number of female-headed poor families increased from 1,825,000 to 3,252,000, a 78 percent increase between 1969 and 1981. During the same period, the number of "other" (male-headed and married couple) families in poverty increased by only 12.5 percent.

Female-headed families are the fastest growing family type in the United States. The number of households maintained solely by women doubled in the 1970s. Of these, 34.6 percent are below the poverty level. In terms of race, 27.4 percent of white female householders and 52.9 percent of black female householders are below the poverty level. In contrast, only 6.9 percent of married couple households and 10.4 percent of male-headed households are below the poverty line.

There is a bitter irony in the fact that one significant factor motivating female householders to gain greater financial security—their children—also greatly inhibits their ability to achieve such security. The incidence of poverty is far, far higher in families that include children. And 6,305,000 or 52.2 percent of poor children live in female-headed households; this figure includes 5,000 girls fifteen to seventeen years old who are the heads of their own households.

WHY ARE WOMEN POOR?

The profoundly disturbing reality of children raised in deprivation by women who are locked in poverty is not dealt with by our social system or economy. The classic solutions of husbands, welfare, or women's work are ineffective. These solutions are based on a myth of female dependence that has never reflected reality and is badly suited to current economic and family trends.

The myth of the dependent female assumes that virtually all women will be able to depend economically on men, and therefore they do not need to be able to support themselves independently. This myth has led boys and girls to receive different sorts of education and training for adult life. The myth affects the occupational choices men and women make, and it results in discrimination against women in wages and in entry into lucrative fields.

The dependence myth, an attitude held by men and women alike, has never reflected reality for more than a small and relatively wealthy portion of the population. The fact is that women have always worked, and they have always been economically productive, whether they were married or not. In a rural, traditional society, the contribution of household labor was a significant portion of the family's productivity. Even during the 1950s, the heyday of the suburban housewife, 30 percent of all women, and 50 percent of all black women, worked outside the home. Today, a woman can expect to spend twenty-eight years of her life working outside the home.[6]

The women's movement has challenged the dependence assumption vigorously over the last two decades, injecting more realism into women's occupational planning and eliminating some overt discrimination against women. Nonetheless, the assumption that women do not need the independent ability to support themselves as men do has remained a potent force, distorting the perceptions of women and contributing to their own poverty and that of their families.

The error in the myth of female dependence is dramatically demonstrated by the existence of 9,403,000 female-headed households. This has been the fastest growing family type over the last decade, and its growth shows no sign of abating. Part of the change is that men are not necessarily living up to their role in the female dependence myth. For one thing, they die. There are 10,796,000 widows in the United States today, and one-quarter of them are in poverty. Men also leave their wives. There is a growing cadre of middle-class women who were plunged into poverty by the departure of their spouses.[7] Many women who might have been perfectly happy to remain dependent spouses are not given the option.

Finally, women as well as men leave marriages or other relationships that have become intolerable. The divorce rate has more than doubled since 1960, and it is still rising. Since women are almost invariably given custody of their children, the number of female-headed households doubled in the 1970s. There is no point in looking back to some "golden age" of married dependence for women.

Even if absent fathers are not supporting their former wives, don't they take some responsibility for supporting their children? Child support is meager under the best of circumstances and essentially unavailable to the 2.6 million poor mothers with children present whose fathers are absent.[8]

Of all single mothers (approximately 8.4 million women), only 59 percent had an award from the court or an agreement to receive child support. Of mothers below the poverty level, 60 percent were not awarded child support.At some level this makes sense, of course, since the likelihood is that the fathers are also very poor and have little to contribute to child support.

In addition, the schedules for support tend to be biased against mothers and their children. A New York analysis found, for example, that a father was not expected to contribute child support unless his income exceeded the value of an AFDC grant for a mother and her three children.[9] Thus the schedule allowed the noncustodial father the same income for himself as the welfare system allows for the mother and three children.

Of those mothers who did receive a court award or an agreement for child support, 71.8 percent did receive some payment in 1981, but less than half received the full amount due: 25.1 percent received some payment less than the award, and 28.2 percent received nothing at all.[10] Of those who received payment, the average amount received was $2,110. Child support represented 14 percent of the total income of the mothers.

Alimony is scarcely worth discussing. Only 15 percent of divorced or separated women were awarded or had an agreement to receive alimony.[11] Of these, only 43.5 percent received the full amount to which they were entitled in 1981; 23.9 percent received a partial payment, and 32.6 percent got nothing at all. Despite colorful celebrity cases, the mean amount received was $3,000. Alimony is rarely awarded to poor women.

In summary, ex-husbands and absent fathers offer very little support to women and their families. The poorer the family is to begin with, the less likely it is that the father will be providing support.

If the answer to women's poverty does not lie in dependence on men, it does not lie in dependence on the government, either. Welfare does not solve the problem of poverty, because the payments are too low—well below the poverty level in every state. Welfare incorporates a dependent-female model, with the government substituted for the male, but the government is not a better provider than men are.

There are plenty of drawbacks to being on welfare. There are children under twelve in 85 percent of the AFDC households, and child care is often inadequate, expensive, or unavailable. Only about one-third of the householders are high school graduates. Employment opportunities are very poor for uneducated, unskilled women. For many welfare mothers, AFDC seems a rational alternative to low-wage work. Despite the obstacles to employment, there is a great deal of flux between the low-wage work force and the welfare rolls. Neither alternative will lift a woman out of poverty or give her the skills needed to end her dependence.

Job training efforts to get people off welfare have tended to favor men with the better opportunities. The result is that women are slotted into dead-end, low-paying, traditionally female jobs (e.g., seamstress) that will not raise them out of a cycle of dependence and welfare.

SOLUTIONS TO WOMEN'S POVERTY

We have seen serious flaws in the dependence model for women. One theoretical alternative is independence. On a continuum ranging from economic dependence to economic independence, it has generally been assumed that women belonged at the dependence end of the scale, relying on men for economic support or, failing that, on welfare. If dependence did not work out, a woman was ill-equipped for attaining economic independence. Men, on the other hand, were expected to be economically independent and responsible for women.

Does independence seem to be working for men? Men are much less likely to be living in poverty than women. However, this fact masks some real flaws in the independence model. First, men really do not pull their own weight, as the scandalous record of absent fathers in paying child support makes clear. Second, economic support systems such as unemployment compensation are used heavily by men. Third, and most important, families with multiple earners, not sole male earners, are the strongest economically and best able to weather hard times.

The median income for white multiple-earner families is 37 percent higher than for one-earner families. For blacks, multiple-earner families' incomes are 66 percent higher than those of one-earner families. The poverty rate for multiple-earner families is one-fourth that of one-earner families. Multiple-earner families now account for over half of all married couple families. The poverty rate for married couple families is 6.9 percent, compared to 10.4 percent for male-headed households and 34.6 percent for female-headed households. For each family type, the poverty rate is 60 percent lower for two-earner families than for one-earner families.

The value of an interdependent, multiple-earner model is especially apparent when unemployment strikes. Among married couple families that experienced unemployment in 1979, only 23.1 percent had no one else working. Among female-headed households experiencing unemployment, 53.8 percent had no one else working and were very likely to be in poverty.[12]

Interdependence is an alternative to the extremes of dependence and independence. As this article has demonstrated, economic dependence has resulted in the widespread impoverishment of women. Economic independence, on the other hand, simply does not seem to be a realistic alternative for most, especially those who are uneducated, who have few job skills, or who have heavy family responsibilities.

Today, the notion of an interdependent economic unit is generally limited to married couples. However, such a unit could easily involve other family members, gay partners, unrelated adults, or several parents with children. Just as economic necessity is gradually changing the stereotype of marriage from one in which women are economically dependent on men to one in which the partners are economically interdependent, so economic stresses should be giving rise more generally to other forms of household organization based on economic interdependence.

The greatest obstacle to the creative development of alternative economically interdependent households may be social convention. Communes and cooperatives may seem to be limited to college students and radicals, and some leases do not permit occupancy by unrelated adults. Yet shared household arrangements are more rational than radical. When that is understood, economic and political pressure will carry along reluctant landlords.

The problems posed by entering into a relationship of interdependence that is not legally binding may also be a matter of concern. The poverty of women is eloquent testimony to the limitations of the legal protections of marriage, however. Furthermore, some lawyers are dealing with the legal problems of alternative living arrangements and economic interdependence of unmarried persons through creatively drafted contracts and powers of attorney.

Despite the myths of dependence for women and independence for men, society's current response to economic stress is household organization based on economic interdependence of married couples. Developing other interdependent units is an important step toward elimination of the poverty, economic uncertainty, and crisis that plague women today.

NOTES

1. The data in this article are generally drawn from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Characteristics of the Population below the Poverty Level: 1981," *Current Population Reports*, Consumer Income Series P–60, no. 138, Mar. 1983, table 11, pp. 42–44. (When other sources are used, they are cited.) The term *poverty* and the notion of the *poverty line* or the *poverty level* follow the usage in that report. They are based on the definition developed by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised by a Federal Interagency Committee in 1969. The definition uses a series of income thresholds based on family size and composition; if a family falls below the threshold, that family is characterized as being poor or below the poverty line. As an illustration, the average income threshold for a family of four was $9,287 in 1981.
2. "A Black Women's Movement," *Black Commentator*, ed. Patrice Johnson, spring 1981, 1.
3. Harriet McAdoo and Diana M. Pearce in the 1981 report of the National Advisory Commission on Economic Opportunity, cited in Catholic University, Center for Policy Review, "Poverty Has a Feminine Face," *Jobs Watch* 1, no. 6, 1982, 3.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration, *Recipient Characteristics Study: Aid to Families of Dependent Children* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981), 1–3.
5. U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, *20 Facts on Women Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), 1–3.
6. Ibid.
7. Lenore Weitzman, "The Economics of Divorce," *U.C.L.A. Law Review*, 28, no. 6, 1981, pp. 1181–288. Dr. Weitzman found, on the basis of a survey, that the husband's standard of living rose by over 40 percent upon divorce, while the standard of living of the wife and children fell by over 70 percent, on the average. While the husband had fewer dollars to spend than before the divorce, he was not constrained to spend them on the family.
8. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Child Support and Alimony: 1981 (Advance Report)," *Current Population Reports*, Series P–23, no. 124, May 6, 1983.
9. Carol Glassman, "Women and the Welfare System," in *Sisterhood Is Powerful*, ed. Robin Morgan (New York: Random House, 1970).
10. Even the most carefully designed and vigorously administered child-support enforcement system will be only marginally successful at ensuring payment. See David L. Chambers, *Making Fathers Pay—the Enforcement of Child Support* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
11. U.S. Department of Commerce, "Child Support and Alimony," table 3, p. 8.
12. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Marital and Family Characteristics of the Labor Force, March, 1979*, Special Labor Force Report no. 25 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, Jan. 1981).

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Farewell to alms: Women's fare under welfare

Families headed by women have come to dominate the poor, and account for over 90 percent of the 3.8 million families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). AFDC, often called simply *welfare*, is used by 12 percent of all families with children under eighteen. Unlike the popular image of the welfare mother, very few women receiving AFDC are permanent members of the welfare class. Over half the current recipients started receiving welfare less than three years ago. (Unless otherwise stated, all figures are from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1979 AFDC survey [1982].) Moreover, few women are solely or even highly dependent on welfare as their source of income; over half worked during the past year, and over 90 percent were in paid employment at some time during their lives. Indeed, most who turn to welfare do so because they find they cannot support themselves and even one child on their earnings alone.

Welfare policy today does not reflect this preponderance of women among the poor, nor does it meet their needs as working mothers. It is not even directed at providing more than minimal relief to children. The contemporary welfare system is still based on the "male pauper model" developed in the nineteenth century and is oblivious to the feminization of poverty today. The result is that welfare policy not only is inappropriate and hence unsuccessful in eliminating women's poverty but also is increasingly locking women into a life of poverty.

THE ORIGINS OF WELFARE PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

Differentiating the "deserving" from the "undeserving" poor, or in today's parlance, determining who is "truly needy," dominated welfare policy during the last century. Widows were almost always among the deserving poor, as were women whose husbands were blind or disabled. Divorced or unmarried mothers were probably not considered deserving poor, but they were also relatively small in number. The undeserving poor were a group of people often termed *paupers*. *Pauper* was not synonymous with *poor*, but rather referred to those among the poor who, though able-bodied, had chosen a way of life outside the bounds of

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society, as vagrants, drunkards, or criminals: "Paupers were recognized by their extreme state of moral degeneracy, drunkenness, vice, corruption and criminality" (Handler and Hollingsworth 1971, 17). Most of those classified as paupers were men, though this was never stated explicitly.

Because of the threat to the social order posed by paupers, society expended much effort to limit the growth of pauperism. It was punished as if it were a crime. As late as 1934, fourteen states denied paupers the right to vote, and many states and localities required those receiving assistance to swear to their destitution by taking a "Pauper's Oath" (Brown 1940). Pauperism was also considered a contagious disease, and all members of the public, but especially the poor, were at risk. Like leprosy, pauperism was a disease much feared but little understood, and the approach taken was to isolate the carriers as much as possible; the form chosen was the poorhouse.

The myth persisted that most of the poor were able-bodied, and thus there were frequent campaigns to end all other aid and put every poor person in the poorhouse, with obvious mixed results. Though records are not consistent, it is probably safe to say that on the average at least two-thirds of the inmates of poorhouses were not able-bodied (see Coll 1969). Instead, they included the sick, the mentally ill, the disabled, the aged, and children. By the end of the nineteenth century, various movements and organizations were seeking to remove these various groups of the "deserving poor" from the stigmatizing and demoralizing influence of the poorhouse. To this end, they began setting up specialized institutions; a number of famous hospitals and mental hospitals started as poorhouses.

Poor children presented a special problem. Though they clearly were not paupers, their *parents* might be, and they themselves might *become* paupers if left with their pauper parents. But separating children from their parents or removing the older ones from the streets and putting them in the poorhouses was not much better. There the children were subjected to the bad influence of the undeserving poor, and, like all the inmates, many found it difficult to leave the poorhouse, leading reformers to seek other solutions. The Child Saving Movement, as it was known, tried founding orphanages to which children from the slums and from the poorhouses were sent, to save them from pauperism. These orphanages, like those in a number of third world countries today, contained many children who were there because their parents could not provide for them, not because they were orphans, or half-orphans (children with only one parent living).

The orphanage solution was fraught with problems, however: it was difficult to deal with older, street-wise children; younger ones "failed to thrive" (the death rate of infants at even the best institutions was very high); and orphanages were very costly. Many reformers concluded that the best solution was to keep the family together. One of the prime movers for this course was Julius West, head of the Boy Scouts and an orphanage boy himself. Efforts by West and others culminated in the 1909 White House Conference on Children and Youth. It declared that, because "home life is the highest and finest product of civilization . . . , children should not be deprived of it except for urgent and compelling reasons," poverty not being one of them (quoted in Coll 1969, 77).

Though the private charities agreed with this statement in principle, they fought the development of public welfare programs that would provide support for families in their own homes. Nonetheless, it had become clear that the need was beyond their financial capacities. For example, in 1899 the New York Charity Organization Society was able to support fewer than a third of the approximately 1,600 children referred to it for help; the others were sent to institutions, breaking up their families (Coll 1969). Spurred by revelations like these and inspired by the White House Conference, many states instituted programs to aid poor children in their homes; by 1913 twenty states had a Mother's Aid, Mother's Pension, or Aid to Dependent Children program, and by 1931 forty-five states had such a program (Bruno 1957).

During the first decades of this century the poorhouses and orphanages gradually disappeared. Many poorhouses evolved into county homes for the aged or warehouselike mental institutions; others became hospitals, homes for the mentally retarded, or prisons for the criminally insane. The establishment of mother's aid programs on a large scale, coupled with the development of foster care and adoption by the new profession of social work, decreased the necessity for orphanages, and these institutions also gradually disappeared.

Support specificially designated for poor women who headed families was a by-product of the concern for poor children. Unlike children, however, mothers were not automatically considered deserving poor; they might themselves be paupers or raise their children to become paupers. To avoid these pitfalls, a solution was developed by the nineteenth-century precursors to social workers, the Charity Organization Society's "friendly visitors." These volunteers were long on advice and short on aid (particularly cash). As described by a C.O.S. leader, Mrs. Lowell, the object was to provide the poor family with "one who shall go with them, not to carry alms, but sympathy, hope, courage, in short, brains and character" (quoted in Coll 1969, 55).

Though the responsibility for providing aid to mothers and their children was assumed by the government, it adopted the methods of private charity. Since the programs often included mothers who were single parents due to divorce and desertion, as well as widows, in virtually every program the mother had to be found to be "physically, mentally and morally fit." Whether the mother provided a "suitable home" (that is, one worthy of aid for herself and her children) was determined in some cases by a juvenile judge (reflecting the "child saving" origins of these mother's aid programs) but in most cases by social workers or caseworkers. The criteria used in the early decades of the twentieth century to make this determination varied from state to state:

In Delaware, the mother had to "protect and foster" the child's religion and see that he or she attended school regularly.

In Pennsylvania, the mother had to be a woman of "proved character and ability," whose husband was dead (in "its popular meaning," not just absent), and who did not keep men lodgers (for they might be a temptation to the mother or a demoralizing influence).

In Kansas, the mother had to be "a provident woman of good moral character."

In Minnesota, the mother could be required to learn English and use it in her home.

In addition, intelligence tests and information from neighbors, clergy, former employers, and relatives were used to determine whether a mother was fit to raise her own children. If she was not, her children were taken from her and placed in foster homes or orphanages.

By providing aid in lieu of a husband's or father's income, the state was acting financially as a husband. The mother, in turn, was expected to fulfill the role of wife. A wifelike long-term dependence on the state for income was considered desirable, to provide the family with a sense of financial security and the children with a stay-at-home mother. For example, the Minnesota law's stated purpose was

> to enable the State . . . to cooperate with responsible mothers in rearing future citizens, when such cooperation is necessary on account of relatively permanent conditions, in order to keep the mother and children together in the same household, . . . and secure to the children during their tender years her personal care and training [1917 Minn. Laws, ch. 223, § 15, as amended].

As expressed much later by Johnnie Tillman, the recipient head of the National Welfare Rights Organization, welfare just replaces *a* man with *the* man. The arrangement was thus a kind of pseudomarriage. In fact, early twentieth-century legislators were quite explicit about this; as Pennsylvania's lawmakers explained:

> The father of a family is not only a breadwinner; his loss deprives the family of affection and discipline as well. . . . The lack is more than a material one and cannot be filled by money alone. Because the State felt this need of "fathering" its dependent children, the clause providing for the appointment of county boards of trustees was introduced. Their first duty is the proper administration of the funds; their second—equally important—is the supervision and guardianship of the mother and children [1919 Pa. Laws no. 354].

The mothers receiving this aid traded a high probability of poverty but with some chance of self-sufficiency for economic dependence and a more certain, albeit low, level of income.

In practice, of course, coverage was far from complete. Investigations showed that the actual implementation of state programs was spotty, with only about half of the counties nationwide actually providing any kind of program by the mid-1930s (Brown 1940). This finding, and the desire to set national standards, led the President's Committee on Economic Security in the thirties to propose an aid program that would go to all needy families. Congress enacted the Aid to Dependent Children program (later Aid to Families with Dependent Children) as one of four programs under the Social Security Act of 1935 but limited it to single parents in need. Though nationwide in coverage, the program let state and local officials determine eligibility requirements and set benefit levels. This was crucial, for it permitted racial prejudice and local biases to enter into the determination of which mothers were "worthy" of aid and resulted in the disproportionate exclusion of racial minorities.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF WELFARE AND WOMEN'S POVERTY

Since the thirties, AFDC has become an important source of income for a large percentage of poor female-headed families. As a group, however, these families are no longer considered to be in the category of deserving poor. Poor women have become the twentieth-century equivalent of paupers, and AFDC has become an antipauperism program.

Three factors caused this double transformation of the poor and of welfare policy: (1) the broadening of eligibility rules (through federalization of the programs), (2) the increase of families headed by women who are divorced or unmarried rather than widowed, and (3) the increased labor force participation of women.

By the late sixties, the liberalization of eligibility rules was such that virtually any single-parent family in need could receive AFDC. In almost half the states, two-parent families in need are also eligible. The turning point was a 1967 Alabama case, *King v. Smith*, 392 U.S. 309 (1967), in which the United States Supreme Court found that otherwise eligible needy children could not be denied aid due to their mothers' illicit cohabitation or the presence of illegitimate children. Only if a judge found that a home was so unsuitable that it required *removal* of the children, could aid be withheld. Taking away the power to bar "unworthy" mothers from benefits broadened coverage, but it also created uncertainty in the public mind about whether AFDC mothers were, as a group, part of the deserving poor.

Even before this, the number of needy households headed by widows had begun to decrease, while the number headed by divorced, separated, or (more recently) never-married mothers began to rise. In 1940, 42 percent of all recipient mothers were widows, but by 1979, with longer male lifetimes and broadened Social Security coverage for widows, that proportion had dropped to 2.2 percent (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). The traditional view of marriage holds the wife responsible for its dissolution. Likewise, parenthood out of wedlock is frequently seen as stemming from choices made by the woman. In contrast, widows, like the sick and the blind, are considered to be in a situation that is not of their own making and thus deserving of charity. The shift from widows to ex-married or never-married mothers has therefore been a shift toward a group held responsible for their own poverty, at least in part, and not clearly deserving of charity.

The gradual federalization of eligibility standards also permitted many needy black (and later Hispanic) families to take advantage of AFDC. The delegation of power to the states to set eligibility standards had been virtual permission to discriminate on the basis of race, so that nonwhite participation at the beginning of the program had been very low. Less restrictive eligibility requirements and stronger federal control increased participation rates of eligible families, white as well as black. Though the majority of welfare recipients continue to be white, negative racial and cultural stereotypes persist, so that racism has reinforced the transformation of women into the undeserving poor.

Widows were not only not held responsible for causing their own poverty but also not expected to alleviate that poverty through earning an income. Indeed, during the debate on the Social Security Act that established AFDC, mothers heading households alone were referred to as *unemployables*. But as women generally, and mothers specifically, began to enter the paid labor force in ever larger numbers, including, most recently, mothers of very young children, it has become increasingly difficult to characterize single parents, whether widowed or not, as unemployables. Welfare policy in this area came full circle in 1967, when changes were made to encourage welfare mothers to work. Termed *work incentives*, the amendments allowed working welfare recipients to keep "thirty [dollars] and a third" of their earnings. (Earnings previously had been "taxed" 100 percent, that is, welfare benefits were reduced a dollar for each dollar earned.)

By the 1960s, then, few welfare recipients were widows, and, however unfairly, welfare mothers were considered at least partially responsible for their single-parent status and their poverty. Moreover, however unfairly and unrealistically, they were assumed to be able to work their way out of poverty. Women in poverty gradually lost their status as a special class, with special programs and rules, and they became paupers, part of the undeserving poor. This led to a little noticed but extremely important "sea change" in welfare policy and programs: poor women came to resemble poor men so that the programs for men and those for women became indistinguishable. One indication of how profound the transformation was is the change in the questions asked when formulating welfare policy. Questions about how best to keep together families who had lost their male breadwinner, so that children could grow up with an at-home mother and with income security, were replaced with questions about what incentives would encourage or even force welfare mothers to seek paid work outside the home and break out of "welfare dependence." In short, women in poverty have become part of the able-bodied poor or, in nineteenth-century terms, paupers. As paupers, they are presumed to be a threat to the social order when they are out of the paid labor force and assumed to be capable of working themselves out of poverty.

THE DISTINCTIVE NATURE OF WOMEN'S POVERTY

The poverty experienced by women is fundamentally different from that experienced by men. While women who are poor share many characteristics with poor men, such as little education, no skills, health problems, and/or minority status, their higher rates of poverty are due to two distinctly *female* causes: (1) women overwhelmingly bear the economic as well as the emotional burdens of raising children when the parents do not live together, and (2) women enter the labor market handicapped by their gender and thus earn considerably less than men.

Children

All too often, when a family with children breaks up, the man becomes single, and the woman becomes a single parent (Pearce and McAdoo 1981). In 1981, only 43 percent of fathers actually provided child support, and the amount of support averaged only $2,106 a year per family, not per child. (Some estimates have been as low as 25 percent [Schulman 1981, citing a 1975 study].) The percentage of separated fathers who give support is 27 percent and of those never married to the mother it is 6 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1983, table B). This is no accident. Little pressure is put on fathers directly or through the court system to comply with child-support orders.

Nor is this loss replaced by public assistance. In no state has the welfare payment reached the poverty line—the range is from 45 percent to 94 percent of the poverty line (Levitan 1980)—and in the last decade the average payment has *fallen* about 20 percent after adjusting for inflation (the cuts installed under the Reagan administration will decrease it further for many recipients). In contrast, average income in real terms has risen about 1 percent for white families and fallen about 5 percent for black families (Chapman 1982).

Not only has the economic burden of raising children fallen primarily on women but also the costs of that burden have been increasing. The percentage of children in poverty has always been higher than that of all persons in families. For example, in 1959, the children's poverty rate was 27 percent, versus 21 percent for all persons. By 1980, however, the gap had widened: the percentage of children in poverty, 18 percent, was over 50 percent higher than the rate for all persons in families (11 percent). Within each racial and ethnic group, the presence of children under eighteen raises the chances of being poor much more for female-headed than for male-headed families (see table 1).

Labor market

Many women who head families seek to support themselves and their children. For women, however, the labor market provides a less certain route out of poverty than for men. While only about 5 percent of the families in which there was an

TABLE 1 *Poverty rates of families, by race and gender of householder and presence of children, 1980*

	Poverty rate (percentage in poverty)			
	Families maintained by male householder and married-couple families		Families maintained by female householder, no husband present	
Race of householder	With no children	With children under 18	With no children	With children under 18
White	4.1	7.0	7.8	35.9
Black	11.4	16.0	18.2	56.1
Hispanic (includes both black and white)	10.1	17.5	21.6	56.7
Total	4.6	8.0	9.6	42.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1980*, Current Population Reports, Series P–60, No. 127 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1981), table 21.

employed male householder were in poverty in 1980, about 25 percent of all families headed by an employed female were poor (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980). The reasons for this difference are many, including occupational segregation, expensive and scarce child care, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and unequal returns on education. Women's greater part-time employment, however, is not a cause. As the figures in table 2 indicate, at each degree of labor market involvement, women of all races experience higher rates of poverty than men, with only one significant exception (Hispanic men working part-time). It is not until women are working full-time, year-round that their poverty rates fall significantly. This is particularly true for black women. Even working full-time and year-round, black and Hispanic women have rates of poverty as high as white men *who did not work at all.*

Nonetheless, women who head households alone work part-time more often than men do; with their low wages and insecure jobs, welfare is often a necessary supplement to, but not a substitute for, their earnings. Few women are solely or even primarily dependent on welfare over long periods of time. One study of recipients found that AFDC averages only 69 percent of the income of those who were on welfare for at least four out of seven years and who had received over half of their income from welfare over that period. Moreover, these women constituted only 12 percent of all recipients in the study. More than twice as many, 26 percent, had also used welfare for a similar time period but it had constituted less than half of their income, averaging 37 percent of their total income over the seven years (Rein and Rainwater 1978). These and other studies document the seeming paradox that the *longer* a person is on welfare, the more likely the person

TABLE 2 *Poverty rates of families, by race, sex, and work experience of household head, 1980*

	Poverty rate (percentage in poverty)							
	Male householder (male-only and husband-wife families)				Female householder (husband absent)			
Work experience of householder (1979)	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Total	White	Black	Hispanic
Did not work	14	11	34	37	54	43	74	77
Worked part-year[a]	12	11	19	26	43	38	57	49
Worked full-year part-time	8	6	10	25	26	18	48	14
Worked full-year full-time	3	3	4	6	5	4	11	10

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1980,* Series P–60, no. 127 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Aug. 1981), table 21.

[a] Includes both part-time and full-time.

is also to be *working,* either alternately or concurrently. The typical long-term welfare recipient is a woman who works, but whose skills, age, location, age and number of children, education, or health status limits her employment opportunities and thus her income from paid work.

THE MALE PAUPER MODEL OF WELFARE POLICY AND POOR WOMEN

The traditional analysis of the problem of poverty for the able-bodied poor has been quite simple: their problem is joblessness, and the solution is to "give" them a job. Historically, application of this policy has sometimes been quite harsh, as when paupers were incarcerated in workhouses or forcibly conscripted into the army or navy. At other times it has been less so, but always the programs have been guided by the principle that welfare should be not only less remunerative than the lowest paying job but also so stigmatized and so inaccessible that it will be resorted to by only the most desperate.

Given the distinctive character of women's poverty, what effect has the application of the male pauper model had on women in poverty? In brief, the effects are that (1) welfare policy has been ineffective in leading women and their families out of poverty and into economic self-sufficiency, and (2) it appears to be increasingly locking women into a life of poverty (including but not limited to poverty through dependence on welfare). In short, the male pauper model is a failure when applied to women's poverty.

The simple formula "joblessness is the problem, jobs are the solution" does not work for women because their poverty is different from that of men. It is not the lack of jobs that leads women into poverty. Indeed, 90 percent of women on welfare have worked; when they turn to welfare, it is because they cannot support themselves solely on their earnings. For women, the combination of the economic burden of dependent children and gender handicap in the labor market makes jobs just one piece of the solution.

LOCKING WOMEN INTO POVERTY: THE DUAL WELFARE SYSTEM

Treating women as if they were no different from able-bodied men who are poor has the long-run effect of locking women into poverty, or near poverty, whether or not they receive welfare assistance. Some of the ways in which this occurs are:

1. The obsession with "put them to work" results in women taking jobs with income or benefits (particularly health insurance) that are insufficient for their families' needs.
2. Training available through WIN (Work Incentive program) or CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) was too often for traditionally female jobs (e.g., cafeteria worker) that paid poverty-level wages. Such "opportunities" thus reinforced the occupational segregation and ghettoization of women and the poverty that goes with these.
3. Even in training programs, no provision was made for child care, although half the mothers receiving welfare have a child under age six. For mothers of young children, the burden of both finding and paying for adequate child care is great enough to forestall their entering employment and/or training for many years.

In the short run, it is possible to force many women to take jobs. In the long run, however, some of these women will lose their jobs because they are in marginal, unstable industries, and some will leave their jobs because they need health benefits for themselves or their children that such jobs do not provide. Some will turn to welfare, and some will find other resources to fill their needs, but few will obtain adequate incomes.

BLACK WOMEN AND WELFARE

Black women heading families experience considerably higher rates of poverty than white women or even black men. This reflects an important change in the last two decades; poverty rates for black male-headed families have dropped very rapidly while those for black female-headed families have risen. In short, the burden of poverty in the black community has shifted to families that are headed by women; in the last decade, they have gone from less than half to almost three quarters of all poor black families (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1980, table 5). As

TABLE 3 Number of persons in families in poverty, by race and sex of householder, 1960–80

	Number of persons in families in poverty (in thousands)		
Year and race of householder	All families	Families maintained by female householder, no husband present	Percentage of persons in families in poverty who are in families maintained by females alone
1960			
Total	34,925	7,247	21
White	24,262	4,296	18
Black	9,112	2,416	26
Hispanic	—	—	—
1970			
Total	20,330	7,503	37
White	13,323	3,761	28
Black	6,683	3,656	55
Hispanic	2,252[a]	733[a]	32
1980			
Total	22,601	10,120	45
White	14,587	4,990	34
Black	7,190	4,984	69
Hispanic	3,143	1,319	42

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1980*, Series P–60, no. 127 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Aug. 1981), table 18.

[a] Data are for 1972.

shown in table 3, the proportion of persons in poverty who are in families maintained by women has risen for all groups (from 21 percent in 1960 to 45 percent in 1980), with the most dramatic shift occurring among black families. (The numbers for *persons* and for *families* in poverty differ slightly because of family size differences.)

Some observers believe this shift is polarizing the black community, not along class lines but rather along marital status and gender lines. As Farley and Bianchi (1982, 20) found, the ratio of average per capita income in black female-headed families to that in husband–wife families had dropped in the last two decades from 0.63 to 0.47. That is, the average person (including children) in a black family headed solely by a woman now has an income less than half that of the average person in a black husband–wife family.

The rising proportion of black families that are headed by women—above 40 percent by 1980—is sometimes cited as the reason that black families have not closed the income gap with white families (Green and Welniak, 1982). While it is true that black husband–wife families, particularly when both spouses are working, have incomes that approach the level of similar white families, it should not be assumed that the two-parent households are the cause of high income levels. Conversely, it should not be assumed that one-parent households are the sole cause of poverty. Rather, it is apparent that the high rates of unemployment, underemployment, and poverty among young black men is an important cause of the formation and persistence of single-parent households by black women. Moreover, the black single mother is more likely to remain single longer and is less likely to marry or remarry than the single white mother. The black mother is also less likely to receive child support, and when she does she receives less, just over half as much as the average white mother (Pearce and McAdoo 1981, 9). Though black women working full-time, year-round earn median wages that are 93 percent of those of similar white women, black women who head households alone are less likely to be in the paid labor force at all (57 percent versus 65 percent of white women householders), and less than a third of such black women are fully employed (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1982). Thus their disadvantaged status in the labor market (a product of both gender and race), plus the economic burden of children and the lesser resources and greater poverty of the black community in general cause black women to experience both more and greater poverty than do white women.

Though the welfare system cannot discriminate on the basis of race, there are a number of ways in which black women on welfare are especially disadvantaged. A disproportionate number of poor black women are in the South, particularly the rural South, where benefits are very low. Because food stamps are a federal program, while AFDC is locally administered (including the setting of benefit levels), the value of food stamps may be greater than that of the AFDC, although the latter is theoretically pegged at three times the amount necessary for a bare minimum diet. A third of Mississippi's welfare recipients live in free housing, either public housing that they are too poor to pay for or private housing so dilapidated that no one demands rent or mortgage payments for its use.

A NEW ERA IN OLD WINESKINS

The Reagan budget cuts in AFDC most severely affect those currently working. In about half the states, the average recipient who is also employed would actually be better off, considering average work expenses (such as carfare) and child care costs, if she did not work at all. Many who received very small AFDC payments lose not only the AFDC benefit when they are cut from the rolls but also food stamps, Medicaid, and other benefits that are "tied" to AFDC.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the system leaves mothers with only one route out of poverty—marriage. It is as if there were a new "less eligibility rule" operating for women. The original "less eligibility rule" provided that no one should receive from welfare more than he could earn at the lowest paying job; it was designed to encourage men to go to work. The female "less eligibility rule" seems to be that no woman's life on welfare, or combination of work and welfare, should be better than the poorest marriage. (Ironically, this is the only aspect of welfare policy specifically aimed at women.) While it is obviously not an explicit rule, undeniably the welfare system rarely enables a woman to become economically independent, and welfare policymakers have expressed much concern to avoid policies that might promote the breakup of marriages, no matter how bad they are.

One of the dilemmas facing social welfare policymakers is that the goals of economic self-sufficiency and marital stability may well be inconsistent. Reviews of studies of AFDC and particularly of negative income tax experiments found that income guarantees, even at low levels, increased marital split rates (Bishop 1980; MacDonald and Sawhill 1978). Wrestling with this finding, Bishop chooses policy options on the assumption that "the political process has decided it is desirable, ceteris paribus, to minimize any marital destablizing side-effects of government policy," even while he notes that this goal sometimes conflicts with other goals, including the one of "reducing the economic dependence of women" (1980, 324). He then goes on to propose wage supplements to the "working head" of the family, stating that "the husband's role as provider should be maintained" (p. 326).

Why has women's fare under welfare so consistently been impoverishment rather than freedom from want? Piven and Cloward (1971) have argued that the welfare system's raison d'être is the necessity of preserving social order; paupers who do not work but are not aged or ill are capable of revolution. "Regulating the poor" is thus a process of forcing the poor into the world of work, with its discipline and control, preferably in the profit economy but if necessary—for example, during the Depression—in public jobs programs. This does not, however, explain the drive to put *women* to work, for mothers are not historically seen as either the leaders or the troops of social revolutionary movements. One possible explanation is that women who do not need men or marriage for economic support are also threatening, in a different way, to the established social order, for they are outside the "discipline" of the institution of marriage.

Despite its efforts, public policy has not stemmed the steadily rising tide of households headed by women. Public policies can and have had an impact on the poverty levels of those households, however, and it has not been a positive one. Recent budget cuts and program changes have widened the gender gap and exacerbated the feminization of poverty (Pearce 1978). Liberalized divorce laws and lessened social restrictions on single parenting now permit women to be socially independent, but a discriminatory economic system prevents them from being economically independent. Women find themselves trapped between these opposing forces and frustrated by the conflicting messages coming from society's institutions. Though the welfare system bills itself as the safety net that backs up the failings of other economic and social systems, it hardly provides women with a way out of poverty. Indeed, since it has continued to apply a male pauper model precisely when the population in need has become increasingly female, its inappropriate programs reinforce rather than relieve women's poverty.

If one extrapolates present demographic trends into the future, by the year 2000, all of the poor will be in families maintained by women alone. Whether that happens will depend in large part on whether we make fundamental changes in welfare policy and programs. Without such changes, poverty will continue to be the common thread of women's fare under welfare.

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A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE
EQUAL PARTNERSHIP IN MARRIAGE
SEXISM IS A SOCIAL DISEASE
equal work equal pay
E.R.A. NOW
FAILURE IS IMPOSSIBLE

PART SIX

Feminism

VIOLA KLEIN

The historical background

Our historical memory is so short, and our imagination so limited, that we fail to be sufficiently aware of the striking contrast between our present attitudes and those of, say, a hundred years ago. [Since we are unaware that women who were not slaves could be sold in the open market, it is with] amazement [that] we read the following note in *The Times* of July 22, 1797: "The increasing value of the fair sex is regarded by many writers as the certain index of a growing civilization.[1] Smithfield[2] may for this reason claim to be a contributor to particular progress in finesse, for in the market the price was again raised from one half a guinea to three-and-one-half." This trend in the "progress of finesse" (to adopt for a moment the standard of *The Times* of 1797) does not seem to have persisted, as the following story indicates:[3]

> In 1814 Henry Cook of Effingham, Surrey, was forced under the bastardy laws to marry a woman of Slinfold, Sussex, and six months after the marriage she and her child were removed to the Effingham workhouse. The governor there, having contracted to maintain all the poor for the specific sum of £210, complained of the new arrivals, whereupon *the parish officer to Effingham prevailed on Cook to sell his wife*. The master of the workhouse, Chippen, was directed to take the woman to Croydon market and there, on June 17, 1815, *she was sold to John Earl for the sum of one shilling* which had been given to Earl for the purchase. To bind the bargain the following receipt was made out:
>
> 5/—stamp
>
> June 17, 1815
>
> Received of John Earl the sum of one shilling, in full, for my lawful wife, by me,
>
> HENRY COOK.
>
> Daniel Cook } Witnesses.
> John Chippen }
>
> In their satisfaction of having got rid of the chargeability of the woman the parish officers of Effingham paid the expenses of the journey to Croydon, including refreshments there, and also allowed a leg of mutton for the wedding dinner which took place in Earl's parish of Dorking . . .

Miss Pinchbeck rightly remarks: "That the expenses incurred by such transaction could be entered up in the parish accounts and regularly passed by a parish

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vestry, is sufficient evidence, not only of the futility of parish administration under the old Poor Laws, but also of the straits to which women were reduced by the weakness of their economic and social position."

These instances do not seem to be isolated cases. More examples are recorded in the "Sale of Wives in England in 1823," by H. W. V. Temperley (in *History Teachers' Miscellany* for May 1925), and as late as 1856 such a benevolent critic of this country as R. W. Emerson has to report, in his *English Traits:* "The right of the husband to sell his wife has been retained down to our times." All this in England, a country which was proverbially called a "Wives' Paradise," and of which Defoe had said in 1725 that, if there were only a bridge between the Continent and England, all Continental women would like to come across the Straits.

Judging this situation from our distant point of observation we must not, however, adopt an attitude of righteous indignation and fail to see the facts in their correct perspective. We must not overlook the fact that we are dealing with a pre-individualistic period: and although women's lot no doubt was, in every respect, harder than men's, woman was no more than one stage behind man in the social evolution. We should misrepresent the situation if we conceived of the "Subjection of Women" as the submission of the weaker sex to the superior physical and economic power of free and independent males. It would seem more exact to say that women remained serfs after men had already outgrown the state of serfdom. If we adopt Muller-Lyer's[4] classification of the historic development into three main phases—the Clan Epoch, the Family Epoch, and the Individual Epoch—according to the social unit which ideologically forms the basic element of the social organization, and which is felt to be the ultimate "end in itself" at a given period, we should say that the capitalist period marks the transition from the family phase to the individual phase generally, but that this transition was delayed in the case of women. Keeping in mind the power of persistence of all those attitudes, customs, and traditions which are linked with the family and handed down by the very personal, very emotional contact within the primary groups, we cannot be surprised at the retarded social development in the case of women.

Another error . . . is the idea that women were, of old, excluded from the economic life of society, and are only now reluctantly and gradually being admitted into the masculine sphere of work. This is a misrepresentation of facts. Before the agricultural and industrial revolution there was hardly any job which was not also performed by women. No work was too hard, no labour too strenuous, to exclude them. In fields and mines, manufactories and shops, on markets and roads as well as in workshops and in their homes, women were busy, assisting their men or replacing them in their absence or after their death, or contributing by their own labour to the family income. Before technical inventions revolutionized the methods of production the family was, first of all, an economic unit in which all members, men, women, and children, played their part. The advice given in *A Present for a Servant Maid* in 1743: "You cannot expect to marry in such a manner as neither of you shall have occasion to work, and none but a fool will take a wife whose bread must be earned solely by his labour and who will contribute nothing towards it herself,"[5] expresses a general attitude.

Society as a whole was not rich enough, and the methods of work not sufficiently productive individually to admit of dispensing with anyone on the score of age or sex. Marriage, at that time, was not looked on, as it was later, as a liability for the man and as a sort of favour conferred upon woman, involving for her a life insurance for a minimum premium, but was regarded as a necessity for all, both for their personal fulfillment and their economic benefit. Only when growing industrialization transferred more and more productive activities from the home to the factory, when machines relieved woman of a great part of her household duties, and schools took over the education of her children, woman's economic value as a contributor to the family income declined, particularly in the middle classes. Where before women and children had assisted in providing for the needs of the family, this responsibility now devolved upon one man. Women and children became an economic liability rather than an asset, and marriage was increasingly felt to be a burden for the man. The emotional satisfaction which it may have offered to both, man and woman, was not enough to make good the loss of self-respect incurred by women by the knowledge of their economic uselessness. The endeavour to reinstate women in the economic process, on the one hand, and to restrict the size of families, on the other, has continued from then on up to the present day.

At all times, however, the common characteristic of women's work, as contrasted with men's, was, first of all, that it was subsidiary (i.e., that it involved assisting the men of the family—fathers, husbands, brothers) rather than independent; secondly, and closely connected with this fact, that it was paid at a lower rate, if it received any payment at all, and was not included in the family wage; and, thirdly, that it was mostly unskilled. Although they were accepted as members by some guilds and apprenticed in their crafts, women generally played the part of odd hands, doing useful work of many kinds, but acquiring their skill in a casual way rather than by systematic training. Here we find one of the reasons for the emphasis on education which was so prominent in the feminist movement ever since Mary Wollstonecraft first raised her voice in support of the emancipation of women. It seems significant that prior to her famous *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) she should have published her *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1786). The lack of sufficient training was felt to be one of the major disabilities in women's struggle for independence.

For her personal happiness, her social status, and her economic prosperity, marriage was for woman an indispensable condition. But it was left to a later period, when all the economic and social advantages of marriage seemed to have weighed in her favor alone, that she had to develop the "clinging vine" type as a feminine ideal in order to "appease" men. Only by flattering his vanity could she make up for the loss of the practical contribution she had to offer in the matrimonial relation.

> A good woman has no desire to rule [says Mrs. Graves] where she feels it to be her duty, as it is her highest pleasure "to love, honour and obey"; and she submits with cheerful acquiescence to that order in the conjugal relation which God and nature have established. Woman feels she is not made for command, and finds her truest happiness in submitting to those who wield a rightful sceptre in justice, mercy and love.[6]

"Nothing is so likely to conciliate the affection of the other sex," advises Mrs. Sandford, "as the feeling that women look to them for guidance and support."[7] In other words, nothing befits the slave so well as servility.

To win a husband—woman's only aim and preoccupation—must, in fact, have been a formidable job at that time, if we keep in mind what enormous obstacles Victorian morality put in the way of the only end they thought worth achieving. "Acquaintances with the other sex should be formed with excessive caution"[8] was the general opinion held at the time, and everything was done to prevent free association of the sexes. "It would be improper , nay, indecorous, to correspond with the gentlemen unknown to your father," an anxious questioner is warned. Young ladies were, however, protected not only from contact with "gentlemen unknown to their father," but from their brothers' friends and all other men who were not selected as prospective husbands by their parents.

> J. should not walk with a gentleman much her superior in life, unless she is well assured that he seeks her society with a view to marriage, and she has her parents' approbation of her conduct. All young girls should study so to conduct themselves that not even the whisper of envy or scandal should be heard in connection with their names.

Moreover, apart from seclusion, her job of finding a husband was rendered more difficult by the "maidenly reserve" enjoined on her which forbade her to seek a man's attention or to show him signs of sympathy.

> All the poets and prose-writers who have written upon love are agreed upon one point [is one advice given in the correspondence column of the *London Journal*], and that is that delicate reserve, a rosy diffidence, and sweetly chastened deportment are precisely the qualities in a woman that mostly win upon the attention of men, whether young or old. The moment she begins to seek attention, she sinks in the esteem of any man with an opinion worth having.

A few more quotations from the same source will make it clear with what immense difficulties, imposed by etiquette, the Victorian girl had to struggle in her main pursuit of captivating a husband.

> We cannot lend any countenance to such glaring impropriety as trying to "catch the gentleman's attention!" It is his duty to try to catch yours; so preserve your dignity and the decorum due to your sex, position and usages of society.
>
> Violet must wait. Is she not aware of the motto *Il faut me chercher* (I must be sought after)? The gentleman will propose when he finds Violet is really a timid, bashful girl.
>
> Mary F. is deeply in love with a young gentleman and wishes to know the best way to make him propose; she thinks he is fond of her, but is rather bashful. The best way is to wait. He will propose quite time enough. If Fanny were to give him a hint, he might run away. Some men are very fastidious on the subject of feminine propriety.
>
> Lavina wants to be married—but cannot obtain even a sweetheart. She is afraid her commanding appearance intimidates the young gentlemen of her acquaintance. Nothing of the kind. It is her anxiety, her feverish stepping out of her maidenly reserve, which has shocked their preconceived notions of feminine propriety—and so frightened them into dumb significance. Lavina must be more retiring, think less of herself, and learn to spell better.

The number of quotations, all in the same vein, could be increased indefinitely. They go to show that almost insuperable obstacles were laid on the Victorian girl's only road to happiness, and it seems as if the peculiar feminine affliction called "decline," which consisted in "a form of suicide by acute auto-suggestion,"[9] was by no means only a matter of fashion and a "desire for ethereality." "It might be said of a large number of Victorian ladies that there was, literally, 'no health in them.' The ideal of a fair young maiden wasting away for no apparent reason or from love unrequited was universally upheld in polite literature," says C. J. Furness in his interesting book. But, considering the inner conflicts and the shattering frustration which must have resulted from the circumstances just described, it is questionable whether the melancholy and "decline" of so many Victorian girls were entirely due to fashion and literary model (the two classic examples quoted by Furness are Dickens' "little Nell" and "little Eva" in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*). It is probable that they were at least partly the outcome of a situation which made marriage for woman the only career and purpose in life, while at the same time depriving her both of the sense of social usefulness and of the means of successfully pursuing her interests or of expressing her emotions. Frailness and disease were, moveover, the only means by which a woman could "catch" attention without offending contemporary morality.

> The number of characters in Victorian fiction—sometimes meant to be touching, sometimes not (but always tiresome viewed from the standpoint of today)—who could not put a foot on the ground for weakness and yet had no actual disease is amazing. To most Victorian women, this type of invalidism appeared not merely interesting but attractive: it was almost the only way in which they could attract attention to themselves, while remaining models of propriety, in a world indifferent to their potential intellectual or athletic endowments; and the fancies of young girls who would nowadays see themselves pleading at the bar or playing championship tennis at Wimbledon, dwelt then on pictures of themselves as pathetically helpless creatures in the grip of lingering (but not painful) illness and the objects of the constant concern of their doting families.[10]

A radical change in the life of Western society had been brought about in the second half of the eighteenth and in the beginning of the nineteenth century by new technical inventions which caused an entire reorganization of the productive process. The economic and social effects of the Industrial Revolution are familiar enough to everyone for a brief summary to suffice. Not at once but gradually

> the industrial revolution cast out of our rural and urban life the yeoman cultivator and the copyholder, the domestic manufacturer and the independent handicraftsman, all of whom owned the instruments by which they earned their livelihood; and gradually substituted for them a relatively small body of capitalist entrepreneurs employing at wages an always multiplying mass of propertyless men, women and children, struggling like rats in a bag, for the right to live. This bold venture in economic reconstruction had now been proved to have been, so it seemed to me, at one and the same time, a stupendous success and a tragic failure. The accepted purpose of the pioneers of the new power-driven machine industry was the making of pecuniary profit; a purpose which had been fulfilled, as Dr. Johnson observed about his friend Thrale's brewery, "beyond the dreams of avarice." Commodities of all sorts and kinds rolled out from the new factories at an always accelerating speed with

> an always falling cost of production, thereby promoting what Adam Smith had idealized as "The Wealth of Nations." . . . On the other hand, that same revolution had deprived the manual workers—that is, four-fifths of the people of England—of their opportunity for spontaneity and freedom of initiative in production. It had transformed such of them as had been independent producers into hirelings and servants of another social class; and, as the East End of London in my time only too vividly demonstrated, it had thrust hundreds of thousands of families into the physical horrors and moral debasement of chronic destitution in crowded tenements in the midst of mean streets.[11]

The decline of domestic industries deeply affected the life of women. While the increasing specialization of labor created a multitude of new jobs in factories and homes with very low wages for the women of the new proletariat, it narrowed the lives of the middle-class women and robbed them of their economic usefulness. Not only industrial activities, but more and more of the specifically feminine types of work formerly connected with household duties, were carried out on an increasing scale by the factories, e.g. bread-baking, beer-brewing, soap-making, tailoring, etc. Moreover, the enormous prosperity created by the new industrial organization produced a growing veneration of wealth (now no longer expressed in terms of landed property but of the more flexible commodities of money, shares, factories, and interest-bearing securities). It produced, in the new upper and middle classes, an ambition to compete with each other in the outward signs of prosperity; in consumption, in finery, in the idleness of women. A man's prestige required that his wife and daughters did not do any profitable work. The education of girls was aimed at producing accomplished ladies, not educated women. Frances Power Cobbe recalls in her memoirs:[12]

> Nobody dreamed that any of us could, in later life, be more or less than an ornament to society. That a pupil in that school should become an artist or authoress would have been regarded as a deplorable dereliction. Not that which was good and useful to the community, or even that which would be delightful to ourselves, but that which would make us admired in society was the *raison d'*être of such a requirement. The education of women was probably at its lowest ebb about half a century ago. It was at that period more pretentious than it had ever been before, and infinitely more costly, and it was likewise more shallow and senseless than can easily be believed.

If by ill chance the daughter of a middle-class family had to earn her living, there were only two possible careers open to her: that of the much-despised governess, or that of needlewoman. Both involved a loss of caste, and, besides, were not sufficiently remunerative to make her self-supporting.

Under these circumstances it was not surprising that, among the women of the middle classes, more and more voices were clamoring for equal opportunities and higher education.

It is worth recalling that these were aspirations of the upper and middle classes. They were not identical to the interests of the working women. Whereas the women of the upper and middle classes claimed political freedom, the right to work, and improved educational facilities, working women wanted protection; while middle-class women were fighting for equality, working-class women demanded differential treatment. This claim for differential treatment of women in industry has been recognized by everyone except the doctrinaire feminists and the rigid free-trade economists, and, in fact, the first historic examples of State interference in private enterprise are those laws protecting women and children: the Factory Acts applying to the cotton industry, from 1802 onwards; and Mines Act in 1842 which made illegal the employment underground of women and children under the age of seven; and the Ten Hours Act (1847), which limited the working hours of women and children in industry. The flogging of women had been prohibited in the 1820s.

The appalling conditions of the industrial proletariat on one side, the increase of wealth on the other, gave rise to a growing concern about social problems. The poverty of the masses gradually penetrated public consciousness and created among the ruling classes of Victorian England what Beatrice Webb characterizes as a collective "sense of sin." No longer was poverty accepted as a necessary evil with devout resignation. It was realized more and more that the misery of the poor was not unavoidable and, therefore, that it should be remedied. Charles Booth's extensive investigation into the *Life and Labour of the People* and Karl Marx's *Kapital* are two outstanding examples of this development.

The decline of Christianity, brought about by the unprecedented progress of physical science during the nineteenth century, no longer admitted of the passive acquiescence in the state of affairs as being ordained by God. No longer was one satisfied that human suffering would be rewarded by heavenly bliss beyond the grave, but one asked for remedy here and now. The poverty of the poor—and, to some extent, also the "Subjection of Women"—were no longer considered as irremediable natural states, but as the result of social institutions for which Man and not God was responsible. The following quotation from John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*[13] gives a very good illustration of this new attitude towards human misery and the prevailing optimism with regard to the power of science and education:

> No one whose opinion deserves a moment's consideration can doubt that most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, and will, if human affairs continue to improve, be in the end reduced within narrow limits. Poverty in any sense implying suffering, may be completely extinguished by the wisdom of society, combined with the good sense and providence of individuals. Even that most intractable of enemies, disease, may be infinitely reduced in dimensions by good physical and moral education and proper control of noxious influences; while the progress of science holds out a promise for the future of still more direct conquests over this detestable foe.

The characteristic state of mind of that period cannot be better summed up than in Beatrice Webb's words:

> It seems to me that two outstanding tenets, some would say, two idols of the mind, were united in this mid-Victorian trend of thought and feeling. There was the current belief in the scientific method, in that intellectual synthesis of observation and experiment, hypothesis and verification, by means of which alone all mundane problems were to be solved. And added to this belief in science was the consciousness of a new motive; the transference of the emotions of self-sacrificing service from God to man.[14]

Philanthropic activities expanded on an increasing scale, and, in keeping with the scientific spirit of the time, systematic investigations were made into the conditions of the poor, investigations which mark the beginning of social science. Underlying, and partly motivating, these activities were the prevailing optimism of the period, created by the success of expanding capitalism, and the almost naive belief in the power and possibilities of science.

> It was a forward looking age, simple and serious, believing in the worthwhileness of things. The reigning theory still regarded the removal of restrictions as the one thing needful; it trusted human character and intellect to dominate their environment and achieve continued progress. It was an age content with its ideals, if not with its achievements, confident that it was moving on, under the guidance of Providence, to the mastery of the material world and the creation of certain nobler races, now very dimly imagined.[15]

There is a peculiar affinity between the fate of women and the origin of social science, and it is no mere coincidence that the emancipation of women should have started at the same time as the birth of sociology. Both are the result of a break in the established social order and of radical changes in the structure of society; and, in fact, the general interest in social problems to which these changes gave rise did much to assist the cause of women. Both, too, were made possible by the relaxation of the hold which the Christian Churches had for centuries exercised over people's minds. But the relation of woman's emancipation to social science does not only spring from a common origin; it is more direct: the humanitarian interests which formed the starting-point of social research, and practical social work itself, actually provided the back door through which women slipped into public life.

Owing, presumably, to the emotional character of philanthropic work and to the absence of pecuniary profit attaching to it, it did not seem "improper" for women of standing to engage in charitable activities, and soon we find ladies of rank and consequence running charity organizations, working for prison reform, collecting rent in the slums of the East End of London, embarking on propaganda for the abolition of slavery, against cruelty to children, against alcoholism and prostitution, and for the emancipation of women. The social history of the nineteenth century is full of women pioneers in all fields of social reform. [The American] *Frances Wright*, a disciple of Robert Owen, who worked for the practical solution of the slavery problem; *Harriet Martineau*, the political economist, translator of Auguste Comte, who became one of the most distinguished publicists and political leader-writers of her day and who worked for the Reform Bill; *Octavia Hill*, one of the founders and leading spirits of the Charity Organization Society, who became famous by her work for the improvement of working-class houses; *Elizabeth Fry*, the Quaker, who worked for prison reform, founded committees of visiting ladies to care for the prisoners, and who made missionary journeys for her cause all over Europe; *Florence Nightingale*, who during the Crimean War reorganized the military health services after their complete breakdown under the military authorities and who created a new career for women as hospital nurses and probationers; *Louisa Twining*, one of the most active pioneers in Poor Law Reform and in improving the lot of the inmates of workhouses;

Frances Power Cobbe and *Mary Carpenter,* who tried in Ragged Schools and Reformatories to promote the welfare of neglected children; *Beatrice* and *Katherine Potter,* who were rent collectors in the east End of London and social investigators into the living and working conditions of the poor (Beatrice, later married to Sidney Webb, becoming one of the outstanding social investigators of our time); the Baroness *Angela Burdett-Coutts,* who with money and influence, actively supported most of the charitable organizations; *Josephine Butler,* reputed for her agitation for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, but equally active in promoting better education for women—these are only a few selected names, and do not include those who worked more directly as the propagandists of the women's cause: for their parliamentary suffrage, their university education and occupational equality, and against discrimination in moral questions.

All this work helped, first, to demonstrate women's ability to organize, to investigate, to do administrative and all kinds of intellectual work; and, second, to create a new feminine type, distinct from the prevailing Victorian ideal of the submissive and "respectable" wife whose sphere of activities and interests was circumscribed by the triad Church, Child, Kitchen.

Speaking of Miss Cons, another social worker in the East End slums, Beatrice Webb notes in her diary (1885): "To her people she spoke with that peculiar *combination of sympathy and authority which characterized the modern type of governing women,"* and she prophetically adds: "These governing and guiding women may become important factors if they increase as they have done lately." As distinctive characteristics of this new type of women she stresses their "eyes clear of self-consciousness" and their "dignity of habitual authority."

Not a few of these women were aware of the fact that, while they were fighting poverty, slavery, and disease, they were, at the same time, fighting in the cause of women. And many of them had consciously accepted this as a secondary aim. They felt that, by creating new openings for women and by furnishing evidence of their ability to work, they contributed to the future improvement of women's position, and they preferred their method of missionary work to the political and journalistic activities of their feminist sisters. As Harriet Martineau put it in a refutation of feminist polemics: "The best advocates are yet to come—in the persons of women who are obtaining access to real social business—the female physicians and other professors in America, the women of business and the female artists in France; and the hospital administrators, the nurses, the educators and substantially successful authoresses of our own country."[16] This prognosis seems to be essentially correct.

The fact that women entered "social business" by way of public relief work, as journalists, and as "substantially successful authoresses of novels," illustrates an interesting sociological phenomenon: the fact, namely, that new crafts, new industries, or new arts afford the opportunities for hitherto excluded social groups to take part in the life of the community and to rise in the social scale. It is not by admittance to the traditionally established professions that newcomers are accepted. The old taboos excluding specific groups from certain spheres of work live on in the form of prejudices and are an effective barrier to their admission. It is the development of new branches of trade, of art, or industry, which enables outsiders to force their way, or to slip, into the established system. Once they are settled there they may have a chance of making an entry into the formerly reserved occupations if they have succeeded by their skill, their acknowledged character, or the power that they have meanwhile accumulated, in conquering old prejudices. The same process may be observed in the case of women, of Jews, of foreign immigrants. In the case of women it was the spheres of social investigation, of charity organization, of the expanding educational system, and of social health services which were the places of least resistance through which the bastion of masculine business was penetrated. The expansion of industry further increased the scope of possible work and created new types of occupation. In the same way, for instance, shorthand typing has today replaced the needlework of times past as a characteristic feminine occupation.

In the arts it was the novel, developing during the nineteenth century as a new literary form, which attracted women and in which some of them won fame as writers of the first rank. One has only to mention the names of Jane Austen, the three Bronte sisters, George Eliot, and Olive Schreiner, to illustrate this point. Among the lower ranks of fiction the number of successful women authors was legion.

Women thus began, by their achievements, to make themselves conspicuous. The fact could no longer be overlooked that there were a number of women—a small minority still, but an impressive *elite* which could be increased—who did not conform to the traditional definition of the type. There was in consequence a feeling among some contemporaries that the definition needed readjustment. In this way women became a problem for philosophers, psychologists and sociologists.

Women themselves became restless. Some of them felt frustrated by the lack of useful work and did not think, with Dr. Gregory, that passing their time with "needlework, knitting and such like" was a sufficiently agreeable way of "filling up their many solitary hours."[17] Even more of them felt humiliated by the fact that their sex was their only means of getting a livelihood and thought it a degradation of marriage that it should, first of all, have to be considered a business arrangement securing their income and social status. Love and marriage being the main concern of women, it was only natural that their revolt should not have sprung from thirst for knowledge or a desire for freedom or adventures, but that, first of all, it should have been expressed as a protest against the humiliation of having to barter their love for support. As Olive Schreiner said in *The Story of an African Farm:*[18]

> It is for love's sake yet more than for any other that we look for that new time . . . . When love is no more bought or sold, when it is not a means of making bread, when each woman's life is filled with earnest, independent labour, then love will come to her, a strange sudden sweetness breaking in upon her earnest work; not sought for, but found.

Moreover, the chances of marriage were more uncertain than they had ever been before, owing, partly, to the increased economic difficulties arising from a social ideal which required the dependence of a whole family on the remunerative work of one member only, partly to the greater liabilities involved in rising social standards, and partly to a growing individualism. The number of people remaining single became large enough to permit their being termed, as a group, "protestants of marriage" and for these to become a social problem. Contrary to the general assumption, however, the surplus of women which would at any rate have deprived a number of them of the chances of getting married, and which as a serious problem was very much on women's minds at the time, was not a new phenomenon. Although the data available are incomplete it appears, according to Karl Bucher,[19] that during the Middle Ages the numerical superiority of women was even greater, varying from 10 percent to 25 percent (the present rate is on an average 7.5 percent in most European countries). But owing to the fact that most industrial activities were carried out in the house the chances of female employment then were bigger. Women were admitted to a number of trades, such as woolen and linen weaving, braiding, tailoring, fur-dressing and tanning, baking, leather-cutting and armorial embroidery, goldsmith's work and gold-spinning. In addition they worked in trades not submitted to regulations, in marketing, huckstering, copying, as musicians in taverns, as nurses, doctors, midwives, as sutler-women accompanying armies and crusades, as porters, gaolers, in the excise, in money-changing, in herding, and in many other professions. Living in homes of relatives they were no useless addition to the household. Moreover, various institutions were provided—apart from nunneries—where single women or widows found board and accommodation. It was industrialization with its separation of home and work, and with its improvement in the social standards of the middle and upper classes, which made the fate of the unmarriageable woman so acute a problem from the nineteenth century onward.

In this way it happened that

> middle class women, by force of circumstances, were being more and more compelled to seek a greater development of their powers in order to become better able to maintain themselves in an honourable independence in case of need . . . . Great numbers of women have, of course, aimed at higher education who are in no possible need of it for the purposes of gaining a livelihood thereby; but the incentive spoken of has been one of the strongest factors in the situation. As large numbers of women became more and more dependent on their own exertions for self-maintenance they found that school French, and school music, dancing, flower-painting, needlework, and diligent use of the back-board, did not necessarily qualify them to undertake remunerative employment, and play their part in the struggle for existence; while as for the old tradition that anything more than elementary education might unfit a woman for becoming a wife and mother, that was set aside by the stern logic of statistics, which proved that there were many thousands of women who could not hope to enter the matrimonial state at all or who became widows and self-dependent after doing so.[20]

The need for making some provision in the event of their having to depend on their own resources was felt by women to be imperative. The following quotation from a report on the "Emigration of Educated Women" read by Miss Rye at a meeting of the Social Science Congress in Dublin in 1861 will shed some light on the urgency of the problem:

> My office is besieged every day by applicants for work, and there is scarcely a county or city in the United Kingdom that has not sent some anxious enquiries to me. Unfortunately my

> experience on this point is not singular: Miss Faithfull at the Printing Press, Miss Crowe at the Register Office, Mrs. Craig at the Telegraph Station, have all a surplus list of applicants. A short time since 810 women applied for one situation of £15 per annum; still later (only ten days ago) 250 women applied for another vacancy worth only £12 a year (the daughters of many professional men being among the numbers); and, on the authority of Mrs. Denison, lady superior of the Welbeck Street Home, London, I may state that at an office similar to those already alluded to 120 women applied in *one day* to find that there was literally *not one situation for any one of them.*[21]

The demand not only for a better general education, but for such special training as would enable women to take up independent careers, had its root in the practical necessity of not having to rely on one's feminine charm only in providing for one's future.

In addition, ideological factors played an important part in creating a "Women's Cause." The contrast between their position as the dependents of men and the prevalent individualist philosophy was one of the things which gave women most cause and most incitement to protest. The spreading democratic ideology taught that all human beings had equal rights by nature; that man must never be used as a means to anything else but is to be considered an "end in himself"; and that everyone should have an equal chance of free development as an individual.

Although the ideal of the Rights of Man did not explicitly include the rights of women (and these were certainly not endorsed by all who stood up for the democratic ideal), they may be assumed to be implicit. The demands for women's emancipation, i.e. for their equal citizenship and rights to education, were engendered by the democratic propaganda for equality and liberty and were its logical consequence. Women's struggle for enfranchisement, for equal opportunities, and for full legal rights were incidental to the struggle of the rising bourgeoisie for political power and social ascendancy.

Whether they fought for a reform of the marriage laws on the ground that no one should have property rights over other persons, whether they fought for equal educational facilities, or whether they emphasized the importance of the suffrage as a means and the expression of their equality, the trend of thought behind all shades of feminist opinion was the democratic ideology. (The same is true with regard to the illusion, held by a section of feminists, that the vote was the key to the earthly paradise.)

The opposition to feminist claims was strong and bitter not only among those who had vested interests in the legal, political, and personal submission of women. It was at least equally strong among the majority of women themselves. While the claim to equality challenged the masculine feeling of power and superiority, it attacked, in women, those symbols which they had developed as substitute gratifications for their lack of real power, and which were no less close to their hearts than the feeling of superiority was to man's. Queen Victoria's appeal to all women of good will "to join in checking this mad, wicked folly of Women's Rights with all its attendant horrors, on which my poor feeble sex is bent, forgetting every sense of womanly feeling and propriety"[22]—certainly found a readier emotional response among the majority than the unorthodox claim of the feminists. Queen Victoria was not the only eminent woman who, though by her own character and achievement defying the familiar notion of the weak and mentally inferior female, objected to the equalitarian claims of Feminism. Hannah More, the moral writer, for instance, held that "that providential economy which has clearly determined that women were born to share with men the duties of private life, has clearly demonstrated that they were not born to divide with them its public administration,"[23] and although "pestered to read the *Rights of Women,*" Mary Wollstonecraft's famous book, she was "invincibly resolved not to do it."

Caroline Norton, known for her struggle to secure for mothers some rights over their children, wrote in 1838: "The wild and stupid theories advanced by a few women of 'equal rights' and 'equal intelligence' are not the opinion of their sex. I, for one (I, with millions more), believe in the natural superiority of man, as I do in the existence of God. The natural position of woman is inferiority to man." And Beatrice Webb (who, however, later regretted this action) signed a manifesto in 1889, drafted by Mrs. Humphry Ward and some other distinguished ladies, against the enfranchisement of women, and in indignant protest against the suffragettes she allowed herself to be carried away at a public luncheon to make the statement: "I have never met a man, however inferior, whom I do not consider to be my superior."[24]

Nowhere were feminists more than a small, much-despised, and even more ridiculed minority. Their unpopularity resulted in part from their militant methods of agitation; in part from their overemphasis on enfranchisement, which was a repetition of the struggle for the Reform Bill, with similar methods and bound to have the similar result described (with regard to the workers) by Esme Wingfield-Stratford in these words: "They had roared for the Bill, the whole Bill and nothing but the Bill, and it took them a little time to discover that what they had got was—nothing but the Bill."[25] But the main shortcoming of Feminism was that, a child of the Victorian era, it presented woman as a sort of sexless creature, a mere abstraction without flesh and blood. The suffragettes' exaltation of woman into a rational super-person "beyond the coarseness of animal instincts," their hatred of Man as their Enemy Number One, their contempt of his unsatiable sensuality, were the weakest points in their theory. It laid feminists open to ridicule and attack, and deprived them of the sympathy of the younger generation of women who, in the dilemma between "Rights" and emotions, would always be prepared to sacrifice abstract principles to emotional satisfaction. In spite of all its revolutionary *elan* the feminist movement had but little appeal to youth, and the report published in the *Vossische Zeitung* in 1932 is probably characteristic not only for Germany but to some extent of other countries as well: "Almost all meetings of women's organizations . . . show the same picture. At least three-fourths of the women present are over forty. The generation between twenty and thirty is almost completely lacking; that between thirty and forty is sparsely represented."[26]

It is the more remarkable that in spite of all their failings feminists saw almost all their demands gradually realized—in several instances by frankly anti-feminist statesmen (such as Asquith in this country or President Wilson in the United

States, who, himself an anti-suffragist, enfranchised the women of his country in 1917 [*sic*])—simply by force of practical necessity, and because their claims were in accordance with the general trend of social development.

NOTES

1. Quoted from S. D. Schmalhausen and V. Calverton, eds., *Woman's Coming of Age: A Symposium* (New York: Liveright, 1931).
2. A market particularly reputed for its sales of women.
3. Recorded by Ivy Pinchbeck in *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1930), p. 83.
4. E. Muller-Lyer, *The Evolution of Modern Marriage* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1930), from *Phasen der Liebe,* first pub. in Munich, 1913.
5. Quoted in Dorothy George, *London Life in the 18th Century* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925).
6. A. J. Graves, *Women in America* (New York: Harper Bros., 1858), quoted from Schmalhausen and Calverton, eds.
7. Quoted from ibid.
8. This and the following quotations are taken from *Advice to Young Ladies,* a collection of answers to correspondents published in the *London Journal* between 1855 and 1862 (London: Methuen, 1933).
9. Clifton J. Furness, ed., *The Genteel Female: An Anthology* (New York: Knopf, 1931).
10. Irene Clephane, *Towards Sex Freedom* (London: John Lane, 1935).
11. Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship* (London: Longmans, 1926).
12. *The Life of Frances Power Cobbe as Told by Herself* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1904).
13. Chapter 2.
14. Webb, *My Apprenticeship.*
15. R. M. Butler, *A History of England, 1815–1918* (London: Home University Library, 1928).
16. Quoted from Janet E. Courtney, *The Adventurous Thirties: A Chapter in the Women's Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).
17. The pertinent paragraph in Dr. John Gregory's *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters* runs: "The intention of your being taught needlework, knitting and such like is not on account of the intrinsic value of all you can do with your hands, which is trifling, but . . . to enable you to fill up, in a tolerably agreeable way, some of the many solitary hours you must necessarily pass at home." (Quoted from John Langdon-Davies, *A Short History of Women* [London: Cape, 1928]).
18. First published in London, 1833.
19. Karl Bucher, *Die Frauenfrage im Mittelalter* (Tübingen, 1882).
20. Edwin A. Pratt, *Pioneer Women in Victoria's Reign* (London: Newnes, 1897).
21. Ibid.
22. Quoted from Courtney.
23. Quoted from Clephane.
24. Webb, *My Apprenticeship.*
25. Esme Wingfield-Stratford, *The Victorian Tragedy* (London: Routledge, 1930).
26. Hiltgunde Graef, "Die vergreiste Frauenbewegung" (The senile feminist movement), *Vossische Zeitung,* Nov. 20, 1932.

JUDITH HOLE and ELLEN LEVINE

The first feminists

The contemporary women's movement is not the first such movement in American history to offer a wide-ranging feminist critique of society. In fact, much of what seems "radical" in contemporary feminist analysis parallels the critique made by the feminists of the nineteenth century. Both the early and the contemporary feminists have engaged in a fundamental reexamination of the role of women in all spheres of life, and of the relationships of men and women in all social, political, economic and cultural institutions. Both have defined women as an oppressed group and have traced the origin of women's subjugation to male-defined and male-dominated social institutions and value systems.

When the early feminist movement emerged in the nineteenth century, the "woman issue" was extensively debated in the national press, in political gatherings, and from church pulpits. The women's groups, their platforms, and their leaders, although not always well received or understood, were extremely well known. Until recently, however, that early feminist movement has been only cursorily discussed in American history textbooks, and then only in terms of the drive for suffrage. Even a brief reading of early feminist writings and of the few histories that have dealt specifically with the woman movement (as it was called then) reveals that the drive for suffrage became the single focus of the movement only after several decades of a more multi-issued campaign for women's equality.

The woman movement emerged during the 1800s. It was a time of geographic expansion, industrial development, growth of social reform movements, and a general intellectual ferment with a philosophical emphasis on individual freedom, the "rights of man," and universal education. In fact, some of the earliest efforts to extend opportunities to women were made in the field of education. In 1833, Oberlin became the first college to open its doors to both men and women. Although female education at Oberlin was regarded as necessary to ensure the development of good and proper wives and mothers, the open admission policy paved the way for the founding of other schools, some devoted entirely to women's education.[1] Much of the ground-breaking work in education was done by Emma Willard, who had campaigned vigorously for educational facilities for women beginning in the early 1820s. Frances Wright, one of the first women

Reprinted from Judith Hole and Ellen Levine, *Rebirth of Feminism* (New York: Quadrangle, 1971), pp. 1–14, with permission of the publisher.

orators, was also a strong advocate of education for women. She viewed women as an oppressed group and argued that, "Until women assume the place in society which good sense and good feeling alike assign to them, human improvement must advance but feebly."[2] Central to her discussion of the inequalities between the sexes was a particular concern with the need for equal educational training for women.

It was in the abolition movement of the 1830s, however, that the woman's rights movement as such had its political origins. When women began working in earnest for the abolition of slavery, they quickly learned that they could not function as political equals with their male abolitionist friends. Not only were they barred from membership in some organizations, but they had to wage an uphill battle for the right simply to speak in public. Sarah and Angelina Grimke, daughters of a South Carolina slaveholding family, were among the first to fight this battle. Early in their lives the sisters left South Carolina, moved north, and began to speak out publicly on the abolition issue. Within a short time they drew the wrath of different sectors of society. A Pastoral letter from the Council of the Congregationalist Ministers of Massachusetts typified the attack:

> The appropriate duties and influence of woman are clearly stated in the New Testament. . . . The power of woman is her dependence, flowing from the consciousness of that weakness which God has given her for her protection. . . . When she assumes the place and tone of man as a public reformer . . . she yields the power which God has given her . . . and her character becomes unnatural.[3]

The brutal and unceasing attacks (sometimes physical) on the women convinced the Grimkes that the issues of freedom for slaves and freedom for women were inextricably linked. The women began to speak about both issues, but because of the objections from male abolitionists who were afraid that discussions of woman's rights would "muddy the waters," they often spoke about the "woman question" as a separate issue. (In fact, Lucy Stone, an early feminist and abolitionist, lectured on abolition on Saturdays and Sundays and on women's rights during the week.)

In an 1837 letter to the President of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society—by that time many female anti-slavery societies had been established in response to the exclusionary policy of the male abolitionist groups—Sarah Grimke addressed herself directly to the question of woman's status:

> All history attests that man has subjugated woman to his will, used her as a means to promote his selfish gratification, to minister to his sensual pleasure, to be instrumental in promoting his comfort; but never has he desired to elevate her to that rank she was created to fill. He has done all he could to debase and enslave her mind; and now he looks triumphantly on the ruin he has wrought, and says, the being he has thus deeply injured is his inferior. . . . But I ask no favors for my sex. . . . All I ask of our brethren is, that they will take their feet from off our necks and permit us to stand upright on that ground which God designed us to occupy.[4]

The Grimkes challenged both the assumption of the "natural superiority of man" and the social institutions predicated on that assumption. For example, in her

Letters on the Equality of the Sexes . . . Sarah Grimke argued against both religious dogma and the institution of marriage. Two brief examples are indicative:

> . . . Adam's ready acquiescence with his wife's proposal, does not savor much of that superiority *in strength of mind,* which is arrogated by man.[5]
>
> . . . [M]an has exercised the most unlimited and brutal power over woman, in the peculiar character of husband—a word in most countries synonymous with tyrant. . . . Woman, instead of being elevated by her union with man, which might be expected from an alliance with a superior being, is in reality lowered. She generally loses her individuality, her independent character, her moral being. She becomes absorbed into him, and henceforth is looked at, and acts through the medium of her husband.[6]

They attacked as well the manifestations of "male superiority" in the employment market. In a letter "On the Condition of Women in the United States" Sarah Grimke wrote of:

> the disproportionate value set on the time and labor of men and of women. A man who is engaged in teaching, can always, I believe, command a higher price for tuition than a woman—even when he teaches the same branches, and is not in any respect superior to the woman. . . . [Or] for example, in tailoring, a man has twice, or three times as much for making a waistcoat or pantaloons as a woman, although the work done by each may be equally good.[7]

The abolition movement continued to expand, and in 1840 a World Anti-Slavery Convention was held in London. The American delegation included a group of women, among them Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. In Volume I of the *History of Woman Suffrage,* written and edited by Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, the authors note that the mere presence of women delegates produced an "excitement and vehemence of protest and denunciation [that] could not have been greater, if the news had come that the French were about to invade England."[8] The women were relegated to the galleries and prohibited from participating in any of the proceedings. That society at large frowned upon women participating in political activities was one thing; that the leading male radicals, those most concerned with social inequalities, should also discriminate against women was quite another. The events at the world conference reinforced the women's growing awareness that the battle for the abolition of Negro slavery could never be won without a battle for the abolition of woman's slavery:

> As Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton wended their way arm in arm down Great Queen Street that night, reviewing the exciting scenes of the day, they agreed to hold a woman's rights convention on their return to America, as the men to whom they had just listened had manifested their great need of some education on that question.[9]

Mott and Stanton returned to America and continued their abolitionist work as well as pressing for state legislative reforms on woman's property and family rights. Although the women had discussed the idea of calling a public meeting on woman's rights, the possibility did not materialize until eight years after the

London Convention. On July 14, 1848, they placed a small notice in the *Seneca* (New York) *Country Courier* announcing a "Woman's Rights Convention." Five days later, on July 19 and 20, some three hundred interested women and men, coming from as far as fifty miles, crowded into the small Wesleyan Chapel (now a gas station) and approved a Declaration of Sentiments (modeled on the Declaration of Independence) and twelve Resolutions. The delineation of issues in the Declaration bears a startling resemblance to contemporary feminist writings. Some excerpts are illustrative:[10]

> We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . .
>
> The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. . . .
>
> He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she has no voice. . . .
>
> He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead. . . .
>
> He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.
>
> He allows her in church, as well as State, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the Church.
>
> He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated, but deemed of little account in man.
>
> He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.
>
> He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Included in the list of twelve resolutions was one which read: "*Resolved,* That it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise."

Although the Seneca Falls Convention is considered the official beginning of the woman's suffrage movement, it is important to reiterate that the goal of the early woman's rights movement was not limited to the demand for suffrage. In fact, the suffrage resolution was included only after lengthy debate, and was the only resolution not accepted unanimously. Those participants at the Convention who actively opposed the inclusion of the suffrage resolution:

> feared a demand for the right to vote would defeat others they deemed more rational, and make the whole movement ridiculous. But Mrs. Stanton and Frederick Douglass seeing that the power to choose rulers and make laws, was the right by which all others could be secured, persistently advocated the resolution. . . .[11]

Far more important to most of the women at the Convention was their desire to gain control of their property and earnings, guardianship of their children, rights to divorce, etc. Notwithstanding the disagreements at the Convention, the Seneca Falls meeting was of great historical significance. As Flexner has noted:

> [The women] themselves were fully aware of the nature of the step they were taking; today's debt to them has been inadequately acknowledged. . . . Beginning in 1848 it was possible for women who rebelled against the circumstances of their lives, to know that they were not alone—although often the news reached them only through a vitriolic sermon or an abusive newspaper editorial. But a movement had been launched which they could either join, or ignore, that would leave its imprint on the lives of their daughters and of women throughout the world.[12]

From 1848 until the beginning of the Civil War, Woman's Rights Conventions were held nearly every year in different cities in the East and Midwest. The 1850 Convention in Salem, Ohio:

> had one peculiar characteristic. It was officered entirely by women; not a man was allowed to sit on the platform, to speak, or vote. *Never did men so suffer.* They implored just to say a word; but no; the President was inflexible—no man should be heard. If one meekly arose to make a suggestion he was at once ruled out of order. For the first time in the world's history, men learned how it felt to sit in silence when questions in which they were interested were under discussion.[13]

As the woman's movement gained in strength, attacks upon it became more vitriolic. In newspaper editorials and church sermons anti-feminists argued vociferously that the public arena was not the proper place for women. In response to such criticism, Stanton wrote in an article in the Rochester, New York, *National Reformer:*

> If God has assigned a sphere to man and one to woman, we claim the right to judge ourselves of His design in reference to *us*, and we accord to man the same privilege. . . . We have all seen a man making a jackass of himself in the pulpit, at the bar, or in our legislative halls. . . . Now, is it to be wondered at that woman has some doubts about the present position assigned her being the true one, when her every-day experience shows her that man makes such fatal mistakes in regard to himself?[14]

It was abundantly clear to the women that they could not rely on the pulpit or the "establishment" press for either factual or sympathetic reportage; nor could they use the press as a means to disseminate their ideas. As a result they depended on the abolitionist papers of the day, and in addition founded a number of independent women's journals including *The Lily, The Una, Woman's Advocate, Pittsburgh Visiter* [*sic*], etc.

One of the many issues with which the women activists were concerned was dress reform. Some began to wear the "bloomer" costume (a misnomer since Amelia Bloomer, although an advocate of the loose-fitting dress, was neither its originator nor the first to wear it) in protest against the tight-fitting and singularly uncomfortable cinched-waisted stays and layers of petticoats. However, as Flexner has noted, "The attempt at dress reform, although badly needed, was not only unsuccessful but boomeranged and had to be abandoned."[15] Women's rights advocates became known as "bloomers" and the movement for equal rights as well as the individual women were subjected to increasing ridicule. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the earliest to wear the more comfortable outfit, was one of the first to suggest its rejection. In a letter to Susan B. Anthony she wrote:

> We put the dress on for greater freedom, but what is physical freedom compared with mental bondage? . . . It is not wise, Susan, to use up so much energy and feeling that way. You can put them to better use. I speak from experience.[16]

When the Civil War began in 1861, woman's rights advocates were urged to abandon their cause and support the war effort. Although Anthony and Stanton continued arguing that any battle for freedom must include woman's freedom, the woman's movement activities essentially stopped for the duration of the war. After the war and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery (for which the women activists had campaigned vigorously), the abolitionists began to press for passage of a Fourteenth Amendment to secure the rights, privileges, and immunities of citizens (the new freedmen) under the law. In the second section of the proposed Amendment, however, the word "male" appeared, introducing a sex distinction into the Constitution for the first time. Shocked and enraged by the introduction of the word "male," the women activists mounted an extensive campaign to eliminate it. They were dismayed to find that no one, neither the Republican administration nor their old abolitionist allies, had any intention of "complicating" the campaign for Negroes' rights by advocating women's rights as well. Over and over again the women were told, "This is the Negroes' hour." The authors of *History of Woman Suffrage* analyzed the women's situation:

> During the six years they held their own claims in abeyance to the slaves of the South, and labored to inspire the people with enthusiasm for the great measures of the Republican party, they were highly honored as "wise, loyal, and clear-sighted." But again when the slaves were emancipated and they asked that women should be recognized in the reconstruction as citizens of the Republic, equal before the law, all these transcendent virtues vanished like dew before the morning sun. And thus it ever is so long as woman labors to second man's endeavors and exalt *his* sex above her own, her virtues pass unquestioned; but when she dares to demand rights and privileges for herself, her motives, manners, dress, personal appearance, character, are subjects for ridicule and detraction.[17]

The women met with the same response when they campaigned to get the word "sex" added to the proposed Fifteenth Amendment which would prohibit the denial of suffrage on account of race.[18]

As a result of these setbacks, the woman's movement assumed as its first priority the drive for woman's suffrage. It must be noted, however, that while nearly all the women activists agreed on the need for suffrage, in 1869 the movement split over ideological and tactical questions into major factions. In May of that year, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the National Woman Suffrage Association. Six months later, Lucy Stone and others organized the American Woman Suffrage Association. The American, in an attempt to make the idea of woman's suffrage "respectable," limited its activities to that issue, and refused to address itself to any of the more "controversial" subjects such as marriage or the church. The National, on the other hand, embraced the broad cause of woman's rights of which the vote was seen primarily as a *means* of achieving those rights. During this time Anthony and Stanton founded *The Revolution*, which became one of the best known of the independent women's newspapers. The weekly journal began in January, 1868, and took as its motto, "Men, their rights and nothing more; women, their rights and nothing less." In addition to discussion of suffrage, *The Revolution* examined the institutions of marriage, the law, organized religion, etc. Moreover, the newspaper touched on "such incendiary topics as the double standard and prostitution."[19] Flexner describes the paper:

> [It] made a contribution to the women's cause out of all proportion to either its size, brief lifespan, or modest circulation. . . . Here was news not to be found elsewhere—of the organization of women typesetters, tailoresses, and laundry workers, of the first women's clubs, of pioneers in the professions, of women abroad. But *The Revolution* did more than just carry news, or set a new standard for professionalism for papers edited by and for women. It gave their movement a forum, focus, and direction. It pointed, it led, and it fought, with vigor and vehemence.[20]

The two suffrage organizations coexisted for over twenty years and used some of the same tactics in their campaigns for suffrage: lecture tours, lobbying activities, petition campaigns, etc. The American, however, focused exclusively on state-by-state action, while the National in addition pushed for a Woman Suffrage Amendment to the Constitution. Susan B. Anthony and others also attempted to gain the vote through court decisions. The Supreme Court, however, held in 1875[21] that suffrage was not necessarily one of the privileges and immunities of citizens protected by the Fourteenth Amendment. Thus, although women were *citizens* it was nonetheless permissible, according to the Court, to constitutionally limit the right to vote to males.

During this same period, a strong temperance movement had also emerged. Large numbers of women, including some suffragists, became actively involved in the temperance cause. It is important to note that one of the main reasons women became involved in pressing for laws restricting the sale and consumption of alcohol was that their legal status as married women offered them no protection against either physical abuse or abandonment by a drunken husband. It might be added that the reason separate women's temperance organizations were formed was that women were not permitted to participate in the men's groups. In spite of the fact that temperance was in "woman's interests," the growth of the women's temperance movement solidified the liquor and brewing industries' opposition to woman suffrage. As a result, suffrage leaders became convinced of the necessity of keeping the two issues separate.

As the campaign for woman suffrage grew, more and more sympathizers were attracted to the conservative and "respectable" American Association which, as noted above, deliberately limited its work to the single issue of suffrage. After two decades "respectability" won out, and the broad-ranging issues of the earlier movement had been largely subsumed by suffrage. (Even the Stanton-Anthony forces had somewhat redefined their goals and were focusing primarily on suffrage.) By 1890, when the American and the National merged to become the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the woman's movement had, in fact, been transformed into the single-issue suffrage movement. Moreover, although Elizabeth Cady Stanton, NAWSA's first president, was succeeded two years later by Susan B. Anthony, the first women activists, with their catholic range of concerns, were slowly being replaced by a second group far more limited in their political analysis. It should be noted that Stanton herself, after her two-year term as president of the new organization, withdrew from active work in the suffrage campaign. Although [she had been] one of the earliest feminist leaders to understand the need for woman suffrage, by this time Stanton believed that the main obstacle to woman's equality was the church and organized religion.

During the entire development of the woman's movement, perhaps the argument most often used by anti-feminists was that the subjugation of women was divinely ordained as written in the Bible. Stanton attacked the argument head-on. She and a group of twenty-three women, including three ordained ministers, produced *The Woman's Bible*[22] which presented a systematic feminist critique of woman's role and image in the Bible. Some Biblical chapters were presented as proof that the Scripture itself was the source of woman's subjugation; others to show that, if reinterpreted, men and women were indeed equals in the Bible, not superior and inferior beings. "We have made a fetich [*sic*] of the Bible long enough. The time has come to read it as we do all other books, accepting the good and rejecting the evil it teaches."[23] Dismissing the "rib story" as a "petty surgical operation," Stanton argued further that the entire structure of the Bible was predicated on the notion of Eve's (woman's) corruption:

> Take the snake, the fruit-tree and the woman from the tableau, and we have no fall, nor frowning Judge, no Inferno, no everlasting punishment;—hence no need of a Savior. Thus the bottom falls out of the whole Christian theology. Here is the reason why in all the Biblical researches and higher criticisms, the scholars never touch the position of women.[24]

Not surprisingly, *The Woman's Bible* was considered scandalous and sacrilegious by most. The Suffrage Association members themselves, with the exception of Anthony and a few others, publicly disavowed Stanton and her work. They feared that the image of the already controversial suffrage movement would be irreparably damaged if the public were to associate it with Stanton's radical tract.

Shortly after the turn of the century, the second generation of woman suffragists came of age and new leaders replaced the old. Carrie Chapman Catt is perhaps the best known; she succeeded Anthony as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, which by then had become a large and somewhat unwieldy organization. Although limited gains were achieved (a number of western states had enfranchised women), no major progress was made in the campaign for suffrage until Alice Paul, a young and extremely militant suffragist, became active in the movement. In April, 1913, she formed a small radical group known as the Congressional Union (later reorganized as the Woman's Party) to work exclusively on a campaign for a *federal* Woman Suffrage Amendment using any tactics necessary, no matter how unorthodox. Her group organized parades, mass demonstrations, hunger strikes, and its members were on several occasions arrested and jailed.[25] Although many suffragists rejected both the militant style and tactics of the Congressional Union, they nonetheless did consider Paul and her followers in large part responsible for "shocking" the languishing movement into activity pressuring for the federal Amendment. The Woman Suffrage Amendment (known as the "Anthony Amendment"), introduced into every session of Congress from 1878 on, was finally ratified on August 26, 1920.

Nearly three-quarters of a century had passed since the demand for woman suffrage had first been made at the Seneca Falls Convention. By 1920, so much energy had been expended in achieving the right to vote that the woman's movement virtually collapsed from exhaustion. To achieve the vote alone, as Carrie Chapman Catt had computed, took:

> fifty-two years of pauseless campaign . . . fifty-six campaigns of referenda to male voters; 480 campaigns to get Legislatures to submit suffrage amendments to votes; 47 campaigns to get State constitutional conventions to write woman suffrage into state constitutions; 277 campaigns to get State party conventions to include woman suffrage planks; 30 campaigns to get presidential party conventions to adopt woman suffrage planks in party platforms, and 19 campaigns with 19 successive Congresses.[26]

With the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment the majority of women activists as well as the public at large assumed that having gained the vote woman's complete equality had been virtually obtained.

It must be remembered, however, that for most of the period that the woman's movement existed, suffrage had not been seen as an all-inclusive goal, but as a means of achieving equality—suffrage was only one element in the wide-ranging feminist critique questioning the fundamental organization of society. Historians, however, have for the most part ignored this radical critique and focused exclusively on the suffrage campaign. By virtue of this omission they have, to all intents and purposes, denied the political significance of the early feminist analysis. Moreover, the summary treatment by historians of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century drive for woman's suffrage has made that campaign almost a footnote to the abolitionist movement and the campaign for Negro suffrage. In addition, the traditional textbook image of the early feminists—if not wild-eyed women waving placards for the vote, then wild-eyed women swinging axes at saloon doors—has further demeaned the importance of their philosophical analysis.

The woman's movement virtually died in 1920 and, with the exception of a few organizations, feminism was to lie dormant for forty years.

NOTES

1. Mount Holyoke opened in 1837; Vassar, 1865; Smith and Wellesley, 1875; Radcliffe, 1879; Bryn Mawr, 1885.
2. Quoted in Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 27.
3. *History of Woman Suffrage* (republished by Arno Press and *The New York Times*, New York, 1969), Vol. 1, p. 81. Hereafter cited as *HWS*. Volumes I–III were edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage. The first two volumes were published in 1881, the third in 1886. Volume IV was edited by Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper and was published in 1902. Volumes V and VI were edited by Ida Husted Harper and published in 1922.
4. Sarah M. Grimke, *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman* (Boston: Issac Knapp, 1838, reprinted by Source Book Press, New York, 1970), pp. 10ff.
5. Ibid., pp. 9–10.
6. Ibid., pp. 85–86.
7. Ibid., p. 51
8. *HWS*, p. 54.
9. Ibid., p. 61.
10. Ibid., pp. 70–73.
11. *HWS*, p. 73.
12. Flexner, p. 77.
13. *HWS*, p. 110.
14. Ibid., p. 806.
15. Flexner, p. 83.
16. Ibid., p. 84.
17. *HWS*, Vol. II, p. 51.
18. The Thirteenth Amendment was ratified in 1865; the Fourteenth in 1868; the Fifteenth in 1870.
19. Flexner, p. 151.
20. Ibid.
21. *Minor v. Happersett*, 21 Wall. 162, 22 L. Ed. 627 (1875).
22. (New York: European Publishing Company, 1895 and 1898. Two Parts.)
23. Ibid., Part II, pp. 7–8.
24. Stanton, letter to the editor of *The Critic* (New York), March 28, 1896, quoted in Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890–1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), n. 11, p. 86.
25. A total of 218 women from 26 states were arrested during the first session of the Sixty-fifth Congress (1917). Ninety-seven went to prison.
26. Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics* (New York, 1923), p. 107. Quoted in Flexner, p. 173.

JO FREEMAN

The women's liberation movement: Its origins, structure, activities, and ideas

Sometime during the 1920s, feminism died in the United States. It was a premature death—feminists had just obtained that long-sought tool, the vote, with which they had hoped to make an equal place for women in this society—but it seemed irreversible. By the time the suffragists' granddaughters were old enough to vote, social mythology had firmly ensconced women in the home, and the very term *feminist* had become an insult.

Social mythology, however, did not always coincide with social fact. Even during the "feminine mystique" era of the 1940s and 1950s, when the relative numbers of academic degrees given to women were dropping, the absolute numbers of such degrees were rising astronomically. Women's participation in the labor force was also rising, even while women's position within it was declining. Opportunities to work, the trend toward smaller families, plus a change in preferred status symbols from a leisured wife at home to a second car and a color television set, helped transform the female labor force from one of primarily single women under twenty-five, as it was in 1940, to one of married women and mothers over forty, as it was by 1950. Simultaneously, the job market became even more rigidly sex-segregated, except for traditionally female professional jobs such as teaching and social work, which were flooded by men. Women's share of professional and technical jobs declined by a third, with a commensurate decline in women's relative income. The result of all this was the creation of a class of highly educated, underemployed, and underpaid women.

ORIGINS OF THE MOVEMENT IN THE 1960s

In the early 1960s, feminism was still an unmentionable, but it was slowly awakening from the dead. The first sign of new life was President Kennedy's

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establishment of a national Commission on the Status of Women in 1961. Created at the urging of Esther Petersen of the Women's Bureau, the short-lived commission thoroughly documented women's second-class status. It was followed by the formation of a citizen's advisory council and fifty state commissions. Many of the people involved in these commissions, dissatisfied with the lack of progress made on their recommendations, joined with Betty Friedan in 1966 to found the National Organization for Women (NOW).

NOW was the first new feminist organization in almost fifty years, but it was not the sole beginning of the organized expression of the movement. The movement actually had two origins, from two different strata of society, with two different styles, orientations, values, and forms of organization. In many ways there were two separate movements. Although the composition of both branches was predominantly white, middle-class, and college-educated, initially the median age of the activists in what I call the older branch of the movement was higher. It also began first. In addition to NOW, this branch generated such organizations as the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), Federally Employed Women (FEW), and almost 100 different organizations and caucuses of professional women. Their style of organization is traditionally formal, with elected officers, boards of directors, bylaws, and the other trappings of democratic procedure. All started as top-down organizations lacking a mass base. Only NOW and the NWPC subsequently developed a mass base, though not all wanted to.

In 1967 and 1968, unaware of and unknown to NOW or to the state commissions, the other branch of the movement was taking shape. While it did not begin on the campuses, its activators were on the younger side of the generation gap. Although few were students, all were under thirty and had received their political education as participants in or concerned observers of the social action projects of the preceding decade. Many came directly from new left and civil rights organizations, where they had been shunted into traditional roles and faced with the contradiction of working in a freedom movement but not being very free. Others had attended various courses on women in the multitude of free universities springing up around the country during those years.

During 1967 and 1968 at least five groups formed spontaneously and independently in five different cities—Chicago, Toronto, Detroit, Seattle, and Gainesville, Florida. They arose at a very auspicious moment. The blacks had just kicked the whites out of the civil rights movement, student power had been discredited by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and the organized new left was on the wane. Only draft-resistance activities were on the rise and this movement more than any other of its time exemplified the social inequities of the sexes. Men could resist the draft; women could only counsel resistance.

There had been individual temporary caucuses and conferences of women as early as 1964 when Stokely Carmichael of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) made his infamous remark that "the only position for women in SNCC is prone." But it was not until 1967 that the groups developed a determined, if cautious, continuity and began to expand. In 1968 they held a national conference, attended by over 200 women from around this country and

Canada on less than a month's notice. For the next few years they expanded exponentially.

This expansion was more amoebic than organized, because the younger branch of the movement prided itself on its lack of organization. Eschewing structure and damning leadership, it carried the concept of "everyone doing her own thing" almost to its logical extreme. The thousands of sister chapters around the country were virtually independent of each other, linked only by journals, newsletters, and cross-country travelers. Some cities had a coordinating committee that tried to maintain communication among local groups and to channel newcomers into appropriate ones, but none of these committees had any power over the activities, let alone the ideas, of the groups it served.

One result of this style was a very broadly based, creative movement, to which individuals could relate as they desired, with no concern for orthodoxy or doctrine. Another result was political impotence. It was impossible for this branch of the movement to organize a nationwide action, even if there could have been agreement on issues. Fortunately, the older branch of the movement had the structure necessary to coordinate such actions and was usually the one to initiate them.

ACTIVITIES

The activities of the two branches were significantly different. In general, the older branch stayed with the traditional forms, creating national organizations that used the legal, political, and media institutions of the country with great skill. As a result of their activities the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission changed many of its originally prejudicial attitudes toward women. Numerous lawsuits were filed under the sex provision of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Equal Rights Amendment passed Congress twice. The Supreme Court legalized some abortions. Complaints were filed against several hundred colleges and universities, as well as many businesses, charging sex discrimination. Articles on feminism appeared in virtually every news medium, and a host of new laws were passed prohibiting sex discrimination in a variety of areas.

The younger branch was more experimental. Its most prevalent innovation was the development of the "rap group." Essentially an educational technique, it spread far beyond its origins and became a major organizational unit of the whole movement. From a sociological perspective, the rap group is probably the most valuable contribution by the women's liberation movement to the tools for social change. As such it deserves some extended attention here.

The rap group serves two main functions. One is simply bringing women together in a situation of structured interaction. It has long been known that people can be kept down as long as they are kept divided from each other, relating more to their social superiors than to their social equals. It is when social development creates natural structures in which people can interact with one another and compare their common concerns that social movements take place. This is the function that the factory served for workers, the church for the southern civil rights movement, the campus for students, and the ghetto for urban blacks. Women have generally been deprived of structured interaction and been kept isolated in their individual homes, relating more to men than to each other. Natural structures for interaction are still largely lacking, although they have begun to develop. But the rap group provided an artificial structure that does much the same thing.

The second function of the rap group is as an actual mechanism for social change. It is a structure created specifically for the purpose of altering the participants' perceptions and conceptions of themselves and of society at large. The process is known as "consciousness raising" and is very simple. Women come together in groups of five to fifteen and talk to one another about their personal problems, personal experiences, personal feelings, and personal concerns. From this public sharing of experiences comes the realization that what each thought was individual is in fact common, that what each considered a personal problem has a social cause and probably a political solution. Women see how social structures and attitudes have limited their opportunities and molded them from birth. They ascertain the extent to which women have been denigrated in this society and how they have developed prejudices against themselves and other women.

This process of deeply personal attitude change makes the rap group a powerful tool. The need for any movement to develop "correct consciousness" has long been known. But usually this consciousness is not developed by means intrinsic to the structure of the movement and does not require such a profound resocialization of one's self-concept. This experience is both irreversible and contagious. Once women have gone through such a resocialization, their views of themselves and the world are never the same again even if they stop participating actively in the movement. Those who do drop out rarely do so without spreading feminist ideas among their own friends and colleagues. All who undergo consciousness raising feel compelled themselves to seek out other women with whom to share the experience.

There are several personal results from this process. The initial one is a decrease in self- and group-depreciation. Women come to see themselves and other women as essentially worthwhile and interesting. With this realization, the myth of the individual solution explodes. Women come to believe that, if they are the way they are because of society, they can change their lives significantly only by changing society. These feelings in turn create in each a consciousness of herself as a member of a group and the feeling of solidarity so necessary to any social movement. From this awareness comes the concept of "sisterhood."

The need for group solidarity explains why men have been largely excluded from women's rap groups. Sisterhood was not the initial goal of these groups, but it has been one of the more beneficial by-products. Originally, the idea of exclusion was borrowed from the black power movement, which was much in the public consciousness when the women's liberation movement began. It was reinforced by the unremitting hostility of most of the new left men at the prospect of an independent women's movement not tied to radical ideology. Even when this hostility was not evident, women in virtually every group in the United States, Canada, and Europe soon discovered that, when men were present, traditional sex roles reasserted themselves regardless of the good intentions of the participants. Men inevitably dominated the discussion and usually would talk only about how women's liberation related to men, or how men were oppressed by sex roles. In all-female groups, women found the discussions more open, honest, and extensive. They could learn how to relate to other *women,* not just to men.

While the male exclusion policy arose spontaneously, the rap group did not develop without a struggle. The political background of many of the early feminists of the younger branch predisposed them against the rap group as "unpolitical," and they would condemn discussion meetings that "degenerated" into "bitch sessions." This trend was particularly strong in centers of new left activity. Meanwhile, other feminists, usually with a civil rights or apolitical background, saw that the "bitch sessions" obviously met a basic need. They seized upon it and created the consciousness raising rap group. Developed initially in New York and Gainesville, the idea soon spread throughout the country, becoming the paradigm for most movement organization.

NOW and NWPC

Two national organizations, NOW and NWPC, continue to function primarily as pressure groups within the limits of traditional political activity. Diversification in the older branch of the movement has been largely along occupational lines and primarily within the professions. This branch has stressed using the tools for change provided by the system, however limited these may be. It emphasizes short-range goals and does not attempt to place them within a broader ideological framework.

Initially, this structure hampered the development of older branch organizations. NOW suffered three splits between 1967 and 1968. As the only action organization concerned with women's rights, it had attracted many different kinds of people with many different views on what to do and how to do it. With only a national structure and, at that point, no local base, individuals found it difficult to pursue their particular concerns on a local level; they had to persuade the whole organization to support them. This top-down structure, combined with limited resources, placed severe restrictions on diversity and, in turn, severe strains on the organization. Local chapters were also hampered by a lack of organizers to develop new chapters and the lack of a program into which they could fit.

These initial difficulties were overcome as NOW grew to become the largest single feminist organization. While it never hired organizers to develop chapters, the enormous geographical mobility of its members and their desire to create chapters wherever they moved had the same results. NOW also benefited greatly from the publicity the movement received in the early seventies. While much of that publicity was a response to the eye-catching tactics of the younger branch, or was aimed at creating "media stars" (none of whom were NOW leaders), NOW was often the only organization with a telephone and a stable address that incipient movement participants could find. Consequently, its membership grew at the same exponential rate that the younger branch had experienced in the late sixties.

As the membership grew, the organization intially decentralized. In 1973, NOW had three national offices with different functions: administrative in Chicago, legislative in Washington, D.C., and public relations in New York. Its 40,000 members were organized into 700 relatively autonomous chapters and numerous topical task forces. Although it consistently moved in a more radical direction, it had yet to experience another major split.

Within two years, all this changed. With its first contested presidential election in 1974, NOW developed two major factions that fought for control of the organization and very nearly split it into two. Although these factions articulated their concerns ideologically, the fight in fact was not over issues but rather a very ordinary attempt by "outs" to become "ins." By 1975 the insurgent faction had established solid control, and over the next few years this faction began to centralize NOW. A single office was located in Washington, the national bylaws were rewritten to provide for five paid officers, and state organizations were created that deprived local chapters of much of their autonomy.

While this centralization did drain resources and energy from the chapters, it allowed the national office to focus the organization's efforts and thus to increase its power on the national level. In the meantime, the issues surrounding the Equal Rights Amendment acquired a national prominence that had not developed when the amendment emerged from Congress in 1972. Under assault from the right wing, who saw the ERA, along with abortion, busing, and gay rights, as leading to the destruction of the family and the American way of life, the amendment became symbolic of a national struggle unwarranted by its real potential impact. Therefore, when the ERA still lacked three states necessary for ratification one year from the March 22, 1979, deadline, NOW declared it would focus its efforts on the ERA to the virtual exclusion of anything else. In doing so, it repeated the history of the nineteenth-century Woman Movement, which after years of fighting for women's rights on many fronts focused all its efforts on gaining suffrage.

However, unlike the suffrage campaign, the ERA campaign did not succeed. While there is no consensus on why it failed, the fact that NOW started so late meant that it had an uphill battle. The suffrage movement had been actively pursuing state suffrage for a generation before it began the campaign for a federal amendment, and it began this campaign before Congress passed it to the states. Yet, even with an organization in place and troops ready, it almost failed. Getting the ERA out of Congress was not the idea of any specific feminist organization; when the campaign started in 1970, none of them had the resources to do that. Thus, none of the feminist organizations was prepared only two years later to replicate in the states the ad hoc lobbying effort that had been created at the national level.

States that already had strong feminist movements quickly ratified the Amendment (except Illinois). However, they were less than the 75 percent necessary to ratify it. Then in January 1973, a national "Stop ERA" campaign surfaced, headed by noted right-winger Phyllis Schlafly. Drawing on a network composed of readers of her newsletter, *Eagle Forum*, Republican women's clubs, and fundamentalist churches, she was able to bring to the anti-ERA campaign a political expertise the feminist organizations did not yet have. The kind of constituent pressure that congresspeople had felt at the national level local legislators felt at the state level—but for the opposite position.

By 1975 the major women's groups had realized that the ERA would require a long, hard political fight in southern and rural states. It took another three years to create viable, knowledgeable ERA coalitions in those states, largely, but not always, led by NOW. With only one year left until the seven-year deadline, ratification did not seem possible, so NOW asked Congress to extend the deadline. This request was totally unprecedented, and initial reactions were negative. But NOW responded with a professional lobbying organization, backed by hundreds of local chapters collecting signatures on petitions and letters. On July 9, 1978, the anniversary of the death of Alice Paul, NOW organized a march of over 100,000 women on the Capitol, despite so little publicity that many feminists did not know it was being planned. Within four months, the deadline had been extended by a little over three years.

The length of the extension had been a compromise, and it was a gamble the movement lost. At that point there weren't any "undecideds" left among the current state legislators. Success for the ERA required the identification and electoral defeat of enough "antis" to gain the votes necessary when each state legislature met again. For most unratified states there would be only one election before the new deadline. The nature of the United States political system makes it virtually impossible to change the composition of a legislature in only one election, absent an issue of overwhelming importance. Consequently, while a majority of the American population supported the ERA, the votes of a few kept it from being added to the Constitution.

The ERA campaign had several effects on NOW. The idea that women could oppose equal rights for women was initially something of a shock. Once the organization realized that radical rhetoric was threatening to some women and that the ERA was a surrogate issue for "destruction of the family," NOW sought to change its image. While active chapters were created in states that had previously seen little feminist activity, the NOW leadership also admonished all local chapters to devote themselves almost exclusively to the ERA, with the result that other areas of feminist activity atrophied, even in ratified states. In order to gain funds and the respectability of a large membership, the national organization actively solicited members but did not channel them into chapters; previously, recruitment had been a local function. Consequently, while the total membership grew, the number of local activists declined to the point where, even in major cities, chapter meetings were very small. Finally, NOW turned its attention to electoral politics, which it had previously eschewed. The need to replace state legislators convinced NOW that it could no longer neglect practical politics, and it joined the legions of other organizations that had formed Political Action Committees to raise and distribute campaign funds.

This move brought its scope of activities into that previously carved out by the National Women's Political Caucus. The NWPC was formed in 1971 by prominent female politicians and other well-known feminists, with the aim of getting more women elected and appointed to public office. Its organization mirrors that of the typical political party. The effective unit is the state organization. The national office primarily services rather than directs local chapters. Although the NWPC has a decidedly feminist bias, its membership is exceedingly diverse, with large numbers concerned chiefly with gaining office rather than pushing issues. On several occasions it and NOW have endorsed opposing candidates. The NWPC endorses only women (though not all women), while NOW will endorse men if it feels they will represent NOW's interests. Although the NWPC does not command the same resources as NOW, the national NWPC office has been an effective organizer of women's organizations in Washington to coordinate pursuit of their common interests, particularly the appointment of women to government positions. While NOW is invited to the meetings, it has never been an active participant or engaged much in the usual political game playing of the capitol, with the result that Washington politicians view NOW as less respectable than the NWPC.

The Small Groups

The younger branch of the women's movement has had an entirely different history and faces different prospects. It was able to expand rapidly in the beginning because it could capitalize on the new left's infrastructure of organizations and media and because its initiators were skilled in local community organizing. Since the primary unit was the small group and no need for national cooperation was perceived, multitudinous splits increased its strength rather than drained its resources. Such fission was often "friendly" in nature and, even when not, served to bring ever-increasing numbers of women under the movement's umbrella.

Unfortunately, these newly recruited masses lacked the organizing skills of the initiators, and, because the very ideas of "leadership" and "organization" were in disrepute, they made no attempt to acquire them. They did not want to deal with traditional political institutions and abjured all traditional political skills. Consequently, the growth of movement institutions did not go beyond the local level, and they were often inadequate to handle the accelerating influx of new people into the movement. Although these small groups were diverse in kind and responsible to no one for their focus, their nature determined both the structure and the strategy of the movement. The major, though hardly exclusive, activities of the younger branch were organizing rap groups, putting on conferences, putting out educational literature, running service projects such as bookstores and health centers, and organizing occasional marches against pornography or to "Take Back the Night." This branch contributed more in the impact of its ideas than in its activities. It developed several ideological perspectives, much of the terminology of the movement, an amazing number of publications and counterinstitutions, numerous new issues, and even new techniques for social change.

Nonetheless, its loose structure was flexible only within certain limits, and the movement never transcended them. The rap groups were excellent for changing individual attitudes, but they were not very successful in dealing with social institutions. Their loose, informal structure encouraged participation in discussion, and their supportive atmosphere elicited personal insight; but neither was very efficient for handling specific tasks. Thus, although the rap groups were of fundamental value to the development of the movement, the more structured groups were more politically effective.

Individual rap groups tended to flounder when their members exhausted the virtues of consciousness raising and decided they wanted to do something more concrete. The problem was that most groups were unwilling to change their structure when they changed their tasks. They accepted the ideology of structurelessness without recognizing the limits on its uses.

Because structurelessness provided no means of resolving political disputes or carrying on ideological debates, the younger branch was racked by several major crises during the early seventies. The two most significant ones were an attempt by the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), youth group of the Socialist Workers' Party (SWP), to take over the movement, and the so-called gay/straight split. The Trotskyist YSA saw the younger branch of the movement as a potential recruiting ground for socialist converts and directed its members to join with that purpose in mind. Although YSA members were never numerous, their enormous dedication and their contributions of time and energy enabled them to achieve positions of power quickly in many small groups whose lack of structure left no means of resisting. However, many new left women had remained within the younger branch, and their past experience with YSA predisposed them to mistrust it. Not only did they disagree with YSA politics but they also recognized that, because YSA members owed their primary allegiance to a centralized national party, those members had the potential to control the entire movement. The battle that ensued can euphemistically be described as vicious, and it resulted in YSA being largely driven from the younger branch of the movement. (Several years later, in their SWP guise, YSA members began to join NOW, but NOW's structure made it more difficult to control.) However, the alienation and fragmentation this struggle left in its wake made the movement ill prepared to meet its next major crisis.

The gay/straight split occurred not because of the mere presence of lesbians in feminist groups but because a vocal group of those present articulated lesbianism as the essential feminist idea. It was argued first that women should identify with, live with, and associate with women only, and eventually that a woman who actually slept with a man was clearly consorting with the enemy and could not be trusted. When this view met the fear and hostility many straight women felt toward homosexuality, the results were explosive.

The gay/straight struggle raged for several years and consumed most of the time and energy of the younger branch. By the time the tensions eased, most straight women had either become gay or left the younger branch. Some joined NOW, some rejoined the new left, and many simply dropped out of women's groups altogether. After gay women predominated (by about four to one) in the small groups, their anger toward straight women began to moderate. However, the focus of both the gay and the straight women remaining was no longer directed at educating or recruiting nonfeminists into the movement but rather at building a "women's culture" for those that remained. While a few groups engaged in outreach through public action on issues of concern to all women (e.g., rape) or even on issues concerning straight women exclusively (e.g., wife beating), most of the small groups concerned themselves with maintaining a comfortable niche for "women-identified women" and with insulating themselves from the damnation of the outside world. Consequently, while the small groups still exist throughout the country, most are hard for the uninitiated to locate and thus their impact on the outside world is now limited.

Their impact on the organizations of the older branch is also limited, because the networks that formerly existed were largely demolished by these crises. A major impetus for NOW's movement in a more radical direction during the early seventies was the pressure it received from the small groups, which frequently accused it of being part of the establishment. The insurgent faction that took control of NOW in the mid-seventies did so on the platform of "out of the mainstream and into the revolution." Once this faction attained power, however, it proceeded to go in the opposite direction, becoming more concerned with respectability, in order to gain support for the ERA from a wide spectrum of women, and less concerned with developing a consistent feminist interpretation on issues. Without pressure from the younger branch, NOW found the mainstream more appealing than revolution.

IDEAS

Initially, there was little ideology in the movement beyond a gut feeling that something was wrong. NOW was formed under the slogan "full equality for women in a truly equal partnership with men," and in 1967 the organization specified eight demands in a Bill of Rights. It and the other organizations of the older branch have largely concluded that attempts at a comprehensive ideology have little to offer beyond internal conflict.

In the younger branch a basic difference of opinion developed quite early. It was disguised as a philosophical difference, was articulated and acted on as a strategic one, but was actually more of a political disagreement than anything else. The two sides involved were essentially the same ones that differed over the rap groups, but the split endured long after those groups became ubiquitous. The original issue was whether the fledgling women's liberation movement should remain a branch of the radical left movement or become an independent women's movement. Proponents of the two positions became known as "politicos" and "feminists," respectively, and traded arguments about whether the enemy was capitalism or male-dominated social institutions and values. They also traded a few epithets; politicos called feminists politically unsophisticated and elitist, and in turn were accused of subservience to the interests of left-wing men. With the influx of large numbers of previously apolitical women, an independent, autonomous women's liberation movement became a reality instead of an argument. The spectrum shifted toward the feminist direction, but the basic difference in orientation remained until wiped out by the debate over lesbian feminism. Those women who maintained their allegiance to the left then created their own socialist feminist groups or united in feminist caucuses within left organizations.

Socialist feminism and lesbian feminism are just two of the many different interpretations of women's status that have been developed. Some are more sophisticated than others, and some are better publicized, yet there is no single comprehensive interpretation that can accurately be labeled *the* women's liberationist, feminist, neofeminist, or radical feminist analysis. At best one can say there is general agreement on two theoretical concerns. The first is the feminist critique of society, and the second is the idea of oppression.

The traditional view of society assumes that men and women are essentially different and should serve different social functions; their diverse roles and statuses simply reflect these essential differences. The feminist perspective starts from the premise that women and men are constitutionally equal and share the same human capabilities; observed differences therefore demand a critical analysis of the social institutions that cause them. Since these two views start from different premises, neither can refute the other in logical terms.

The term *oppression* was long avoided by feminists out of a feeling that it was too rhetorical. But there was no convenient euphemism, and *discrimination* was inadequate to describe what happens to women and what they have in common with other disadvantaged groups. As long as the word remained illegitimate, so did the idea, and that was too valuable to lose. Oppression is still largely an undeveloped concept in which the details have not been sketched, but it appears to have two aspects, related much as the two sides of a coin are—distinct yet inseparable. The sociostructural aspect is easily visible because its manifestations are reflected in the legal, economic, social, and political institutions. The sociopsychological aspect is often intangible—hard to grasp and hard to alter. Group self-hate and distortion of perceptions to justify a preconceived interpretation of reality are just some of the factors being teased out.

Sexism is the word used to describe the particular kind of oppression that women experience. Starting from the traditional belief in the difference between the sexes, sexism embodies two core concepts. The first is that men are more important than women—not necessarily superior (we are far too sophisticated these days to use that tainted term) but more important, more significant, more valuable, more worthwhile. This presumption justifies the idea that it is more important for a man, the "breadwinner," to have a job or a promotion, to be paid well, to have an education, and in general to have preference over a woman. It is the basis of men's feeling that if women enter a particular occupation they will degrade it and that men must then leave it or be themselves degraded. It is also at the root of women's feeling that they can raise the prestige of their professions by recruiting men, which they can do only by giving men the better jobs. From this value come the attitudes that a husband must earn more than his wife or suffer a loss of personal status and that a wife must subsume her interests to his or be socially castigated. The first core concept of sexist thought, then, is that men do the important work in the world, and the work done by men is what is important.

The second core concept is that women are here for the pleasure and assistance of men. This is what is implied when women are told that their role is complementary to that of men, that they should fulfill their natural "feminine" functions, that they are different from men and should not compete with them. From this concept comes the attitude that women are and should be dependent on men for everything, especially their identities, the social definition of who they are. It defines the few roles for which women are socially rewarded—wife, mother, mistress (all pleasing or beneficial to men)—and leads directly to the pedestal theory that extols women who stay in their place as good helpmates to men.

This attitude stigmatizes women who do not marry or who do not devote their primary energies to the care of men and their children. Association with a man is the basic criterion for a woman's participation in this society, and a woman who does not seek her identity through a man is a threat to the social values. Similarly this attitude causes women's liberation activists to be labeled *manhaters* for exposing the nature of sexism. People feel that a woman not devoted to looking after a man must either hate men or be unable to "catch" one. The effect of this second core concept of sexist thought, then, is that women's identities are defined by their relationship to men, and their social value is determined by that of the men they are related to.

The sexism of our society is so pervasive that we are not even aware of all its manifestations. Unless a person has developed a sensitivity to its workings, by adopting a self-consciously contrary view, she or he accepts those workings with little question as "normal" and justified. People are said to "choose" what in fact they have never thought about. A good example of sexism is what happened during and after World War II. The sudden onslaught of the war radically changed the whole structure of American social relationships as well as the American economy. Men were drafted into the army and women into the labor force. Now desperately needed, working women had their wants met by society, as the wants of the boys at the front were met. Federal financing of day-care centers in the form of the Lanham Act passed Congress in a record two weeks. Special crash training programs were provided to give the new women workers skills they were not previously thought capable of exercising. Women instantly assumed positions of authority and responsibility unavailable to them only the year before.

But what happened when the war ended? Both men and women had heeded their country's call to duty to bring the struggle to a successful conclusion. Yet men were rewarded for their efforts and women punished for theirs. The returning soldiers were given the GI Bill and other veterans' benefits. They got their old jobs back and a disproportionate share of the new ones created by the war economy. Women, on the other hand, saw their child-care centers dismantled and their training programs cease. They were fired or demoted in droves and often found it difficult to enter colleges flooded with ex-GIs matriculating on government money. Is it any wonder that they heard the message that their place was in the home? Where else could they go?

The eradication of sexism, and of sexist practices like those described above, is obviously one of the major goals of the women's liberation movement. But it is not enough to destroy a set of values and leave a normative vacuum. The old values have to be replaced with something. A movement can begin by declaring its opposition to the status quo, but eventually, if it is to succeed, it has to propose an alternative.

I cannot pretend to be definitive about the possible alternatives contemplated by the numerous participants in the women's liberation movement. Yet from the plethora of ideas and visions that feminists have thought, discussed, and written about, I think two predominant ideas have emerged. I call these the egalitarian ethic and the liberation ethic. They are closely related and merge into what can only be described as a feminist humanism.

The egalitarian ethic means that the sexes are equal; therefore sex roles must go. Our history has proved that institutionalized *difference* inevitably means *inequality*, and sex-role stereotypes have long since become anachronistic. Strongly differentiated sex roles were rooted in the ancient division of labor; their basis has been torn apart by modern technology. Their justification was rooted in the subjection of women to the reproductive cycle. That has already been destroyed by modern pharmacology. The cramped little boxes of personality and social function to which society assigns people from birth must be broken open so that all people can develop independently, as individuals. This means that there will be an integration of the social functions and life-styles of men and women as groups until, ideally, one cannot tell anything relevant about a person's social role by knowing that person's sex. But this greater similarity of the two groups also means more options for individuals and more diversity in the human race. No longer will there be men's work and women's work. No longer will humanity suffer a schizophrenic personality desperately trying to reconcile its "masculine" and "feminine" parts. No longer will marriage be an institution in which two half-people come together in hopes of making a whole.

The liberation ethic says this is not enough. Not only the limits of the roles but also their content must be changed. The liberation ethic looks at the kinds of lives currently being led by men as well as women and concludes that both are deplorable and neither is necessary. The social institutions that oppress women as women also oppress people as people and can be altered to make a more human existence for all. So much of our society is hung upon the framework of sex-role stereotypes and their reciprocal functions that the dismantling of this structure will provide the opportunity for making a more viable life for everyone.

It is important to stress that these two ethics must work in tandem. If the first is emphasized over the second, then we have a women's rights movement, not one of women's liberation. To seek for equality alone, given the current male bias of the social values, is to assume that women want to be like men or that men are worth emulating; it is to demand that women be allowed to participate in society as we know it, to get their piece of the pie, without questioning whether that society is worth participating in. Most feminists today find this view inadequate. Those women who are personally more comfortable in what is considered the male role must realize that that role is made possible only by the existence of the female role—in other words, only by the subjugation of women. Therefore women cannot become equal to men without the destruction of those two interdependent, mutually parasitic roles. To fail to recognize that the integration of the sex roles and the equality of the sexes will inevitably lead to basic structural changes is to fail to seize the opportunity to decide the direction of those changes.

It is just as dangerous to fall into the trap of seeking liberation without due concern for equality. This is the mistake made by many left radicals. They find the general human condition to be so wretched that they feel everyone should devote her or his energies to the millennial revolution in the belief that the liberation of women will follow naturally the liberation of people.

However, women have yet to be defined as people, even among the radicals, and it is erroneous to assume that their interests are identical to those of men. For women to subsume their concerns once again is to ensure that the promise of liberation will be a spurious one. There has yet to be created or conceived by any political or social theorist a revolutionary society in which women were equal to men and their needs equally considered. The sex-role structure has never been comprehensively challenged by male philosophers, and the systems they have proposed have all presumed the existence of a sex-role structure.

Exclusive emphasis on the liberation ethic can also lead to a sort of radical paradox. This is the situation in which the new left women frequently were caught during the early days of the women's movement. They did not want to pursue "reformist" issues that might be achieved without altering the basic nature of the system, because, they felt, these reforms would only strengthen the system. However, their search for a sufficiently radical action or issue came to naught. They then found themselves unable to do anything, out of fear that it might be counterrevolutionary. Inactive revolutionaries are much more innocuous than active reformists.

But, even among those who are not rendered impotent, the unilateral pursuit of liberation can take its toll. Some radical women have been so appalled at the condition of most men, and the possibility of becoming even partially what men are, that they have clung to the security of the role they know while waiting for the revolution to liberate everyone. Some men, fearing that role reversal is a goal of the women's liberation movement, have taken a similar position. Both have failed to realize that the abolition of sex roles must be a part of any radical restructuring of society and thus have failed to explore the possible consequences of such role integration. The goal they advocate may be one of liberation, but it does not involve women's liberation.

Separated from each other, the egalitarian ethic and the liberation ethic can be crippling, but together they can be a very powerful force. Separately they speak to limited interests; together they speak to all humanity. Separately, they afford only superficial solutions; together they recognize that sexism not only oppresses women but also limits the potential of men. Separately, neither will be achieved, because both are too narrow in scope; together, they provide a vision worthy of our devotion. Separately, these two ethics liberate neither women nor men; together, they can liberate both.

PAULINE TERRELONGE

Feminist consciousness and black women

Like the Populist movement at the turn of the century, and the Prohibition and Antiwar movements of subsequent decades, the contemporary feminist movement is having an enormous impact on Black America. It is not so much that black people have embraced the feminist movement, nor that they have even begun to identify with it. Rather its effect is seen in the controversy it has engendered within the race concerning the exact status of black males and females, and what the ideal role of each should be. A common (and some would argue, the dominant) view within the black community at the present time is that blacks have withstood the long line of abuses perpetrated against them ever since their arrival in this country mainly because of the black woman's fortitude, inner wisdom, and sheer ability to survive. As a corollary to this emphasis on the moral, spiritual, and emotional strength of the black woman in offsetting the potential annihilation of the race, proponents of this view stress the critical role that she plays in keeping the black family together and in supporting black males. Indeed, many blacks regard the role of uniting all blacks to be the primary duty of the black woman, one that should supersede all other roles that she might want to perform, and certainly one that is essentially incompatible with her own individual liberation.[1] Pursuit of the latter is generally judged to be a selfish goal detrimental to the overall welfare of the race. In short, sexism is viewed by many blacks, both male and female, to be a factor of minimal importance in the overall oppression of the black woman. The brunt of culpability for her unequal condition is accorded to racism.[2]

The object of this essay is to challenge this point of view. It is this writer's belief that the foregoing view of black female subordination expresses a narrow perspective on the nature of social oppression in American society, and, because of this, the solutions that are commonly proposed—e.g., correcting the imbalance in the black sex ratio, or building stronger black families—are doomed to serve as only partial palliatives to the problems facing black women.

The first fact that must be grasped is that the black female condition in America has developed in a society where the dominant economic form is the market economy and the sole purpose of economic activity is the making of a profit on the part of large corporations. Because profit maximization is the superordinate goal to which all other social goals are merely subsidiary, labor is a premium. Labor must not only be made as highly productive as possible but also be obtained at the cheapest possible cost. The manipulation of the labor market is essential to attain these dual goals and provide for the effective functioning of the American economic order.

A major strategy for manipulating labor has been the maintenance of a sexual division of labor, i.e., a situation where certain roles are designated as male, others as female. The allocation of societal functions according to gender has been based on certain biological factors that objectively differentiate the sexes and the way those factors are interpreted through the ideology of sexism. The fact that women bear children has been used to justify their relegation to the domestic sphere. Their ability to reproduce has been made a duty, to which have been added the responsibilities of nurturing the offspring, serving the spouse, and performing or supervising all domestic-related chores. It is easy to see how the pattern of female responsibility for the domestic sphere is useful to the economic system; it has allowed certain critical societal functions to be performed without the need of providing monetary remuneration.[3]

It is generally recognized that the ideology of racism has functioned to maintain blacks in a subordinate economic state.[4] Less readily recognized, however, are the similarities of the process of racial subordination to that of female subordination. In both cases the rationale for subordination resides in characteristics ascribed by the large capitalist interests, which are almost totally white male. Moreover, both forces—sexism and racism—create an occupationally segregated labor market, thereby giving rise to a situation where there are male jobs and female jobs, white jobs and black jobs.

From a cursory view, the white female has appeared historically to enjoy a privileged status; after all, as a result of sharing the bedrooms of white males, to her fall many of the material privileges and benefits of the society. But it is essential to recognize that rarely has she achieved these amenities on her own merit; nearly always it has been through the efforts and good graces of her spouse. The apparent freedoms and material well-being enjoyed by many white women depend not on their earning them but on their fulfilling a nurturant and supportive role and, of course, maintaining a distinctive sexual identity through a socially defined image of female attractiveness. Thus, beauty and sexual attractiveness are essential to woman's economic survival, and maintaining these assets has become a major concern, second only to fulfillment of her domestic functions.

The cult of the home, like so many other aspects of white America, has unfortunately permeated the culture of Afroamerica. While the cult in black society has been subjected to indigenous permutations,[5] in essence it bears close similarities to the white pattern, as would be expected in view of the fact that the economic forces affecting the larger society also impinge on the black subculture. Thus, within Afroamerican culture (and I emphasize within), maleness creates privileges—that is, certain freedoms and rights are attached to being male. Certain sexually specific behaviors are part of the black socialization process. The result is that marriage among blacks is just as much a union of unequals as it is in the larger society; child rearing, domestic chores, and custody of children are largely female concerns. Hence, it is erroneous to argue that the domestic patterns of white society are not replicated in the black community. The housewife model may not fit completely, but it is closely approximated in the sense that black women must bear the brunt of the domestic-related chores, even when they also work outside the home.

What has historically differentiated black women from most white women is the peculiar way in which the racial and sexual caste systems have interfaced. Throughout their history in America, black women have had to face a condition of double dependency—one, on their spouses or mates, two, on their employers. Although these dependencies have also been the lot of many employed white women, proportionately fewer of the latter faced both of them. Double dependency has practically always been the onus of black women. Moreover, because of the racial caste system, a significant proportion of black married women, both historically and contemporaneously, have not had the economic support of their husbands—because their husbands are either absent or underemployed and unable to find employment. What is significant about the fact that so many black women have had to contribute to their families' financial support is that society's reaction to their plight has been sexist. Because they are more economically independent of a male breadwinner than is the societal norm, many black women have been made to feel that they usurped the male role, as if they—and not society—were ultimately responsible for the black man's inability to be the main breadwinner.

It is sometimes argued that the black woman's lack of choice over whether she should or should not work renders her condition totally dissimilar to that of a white woman. While it is true that black men have had a more difficult time providing for their families than white men, and that this has forced more black women to be in the labor force than white women, it must be recognized that the roles of both groups of women were ultimately conditioned by larger economic forces: white women were conditioned not to work in the productive sector, black women were conditioned to work. Those white women who were forced by economic circumstances to work outside the home were made to feel that their behavior was somehow deviant, and in most cases they abandoned their occupational participation when it was no longer absolutely necessary to their families' financial well-being. Thus, neither group of women, white or black, had an option. Consequently, the behavior of both groups of women was a direct consequence of economic forces over which they exercised little or no control.

The foregoing picture of the different though mutually consistent roles played by black and white women has not remained static over the years. In the last twenty-five years, dramatic changes have taken place in the composition of the female labor force. Increasing numbers of married white women have sought paid employment and black women have made major gains in earnings. In short, the labor force profiles of both groups of women have become more and more similar, especially for young women.[6]

The movement of white females into the labor sphere has been partially caused by inflation, which has made it increasingly difficult for white males to maintain a middle-class standard of living solely from their earnings. This situation bears stark similarity to the one that has traditionally prevailed in black society, where familial economic survival—in both the working and the middle classes—generally depends on both spouses' income.

For white women, like black women, labor force participation has not relieved them of performing traditional female domestic chores. For both groups of women, this has had a significant impact on the nature of their occupational participation, as it is generally interpreted by employers as a sign of the inherent unreliability of female labor—i.e., as a source of potential absenteeism and turnover—and is used as an added rationale for relegating women to the least prestigious, least financially remunerative, and most menial tasks. Even working women who are not wives or mothers find their occupational destinies affected by employer expectations that they do or will perform dual roles.

The entrance of more women into the productive sphere of the society has not brought about the demise of occupational segregation based on sex; indeed, economists reveal that occupational segregation based on sex has become entrenched.[7] Thus, women continue to predominate in those jobs that are least secure, least subject to unionization, least lucrative in terms of working conditions and fringe benefits, and least conducive to career advancement.[8] So the recent influx of women into the labor market has not appreciably reduced the chances of males to find employment in a labor market that continues to be occupationally segregated. Women can be absorbed by the economy as a result of the fact that in the past thirty years there has been a phenomenal increase in some traditional female jobs, primarily in the clerical and service sectors of the economy.

Women are judged by employers to be particularly suited for clerical and service jobs for three basic reasons: (1) because of their socialization, they are assumed to prefer these jobs despite the low wages;[9] (2) female socialization trains them to display the attitudes of docility and compliance essential to the functioning of bureaucracies;[10] and (3) because they are assumed to be ultimately supported by men, employers feel they will not resist being shunted into or out of the economy according to its boom and bust cycle. The latter is particularly detrimental to black women, since a considerable proportion of them are the sole or major suppliers of family income.

What is interesting about most female jobs is that they increasingly demand two credentials that are more difficult for black women than white to attain. One is a relatively high level of education, at least a high school diploma. The other is the facility to read, write, and verbally communicate in mainstream English. Although it is not readily acknowledged, jobs as telephone operators, typists, secretaries, etc., commonly require an ability to use the language of white middle-class society. Because of their subcultural status and the low quality of education they receive, black women historically have been at a distinct disadvantage in manipulating the cultural symbols of the larger society. Thus, the deprecatory societal evaluation of black linguistic patterns and the institutional racism of the nation's educational system have worked to black women's disadvantage in the competition between black and white female workers for clerical jobs. In 1982 the proportions of black and white working women in clerical jobs were 29.7 percent and 35.1 percent respectively.[11] Nonetheless, the rapid infiltration of black women into the clerical sphere in recent years seems to indicate that the discrimination against black women holding clerical jobs is declining. Whether they are actually achieving total equality with white women in this sphere, or whether white women hold relatively more prestigious jobs is a question that needs further investigation. What is clear is that the wage levels of black and white women workers have now almost completely converged.

While black men are also victims of white ethnocentrism and poor education, their chances of earning higher pay than black women are enhanced as racial barriers fall, because many high-paying male occupations—e.g., in craft unions, municipal services, and the military—do not place such demand on the communication skills that are the sine qua non for advancement in clerical jobs. Indeed, the military offers many black men the chance of making up the deficiencies they incurred in the nation's educational system, as well as the opportunity to gain significant social benefits that are, for many, the route to upward occupational mobility. The continued sexual stereotyping of positions in those areas that have belatedly opened up to blacks reduces the chances for black women to move out of the traditionally female, clerical jobs. Thus, the erosion of racial barriers in employment is working more to the advantage of black men than black women.[12]

It is important to recognize this point, because it contradicts the commonly held view that the black woman fares infinitely better in American society than the black man. Those who advance this claim generally rest their arguments on two facts. First, a greater proportion of black women than men hold jobs that are designated *professional* in the Bureau of the Census classification schema, and, second, historically, black women were more likely to have graduated from high school and college than black men.

Yet it must be recognized that black women have never held high-status professional jobs in any great numbers. This is because even in the professional occupational category, rigid sex segregation persists. Black women are able to find relatively easy access to such female occupations as nursing and teaching but have a hard time, particularly in comparison to black men, gaining access to higher status occupations such as law, medicine, and dentistry.[13] The latter are just as much male fields among blacks as among whites.

Black women's greater educational attainment is similarly misleading. First of all, in the society at large women are more likely to have graduated from high school than men, so that this is not an aberration among blacks. Moreover, while the number of black female college graduates has historically exceeded that of black male graduates,[14] this was not the case in all parts of the nation.[15] Since the advent of a whole gamut of minority programs designed to boost black college enrollment in the 1970s, black males have made strides in attaining a college education and are now 47.8 percent of all black students attending college.[16] Nor does attending college necessarily have the same impact on women as on men. A study of historically black colleges in the 1960s, containing half of all black college students, showed that the women significantly lowered their aspirations for professional achievement by the time they were seniors, while the men maintained or increased theirs.

> These black college-educated women appeared to be significantly limited by sexual constraints in their career aspirations. They consistently chose traditionally feminine occupations and very few planned to venture into occupations dominated by men. Even more significantly, perhaps, the women saw the "feminine" jobs they selected as having lower status and demanding less ability than the "masculine" occupations—a telling comment on how they viewed what they had to offer in the job world.[17]

The association of femaleness with a distinctive economic function transcends racial lines. This fact is often obscured by certain racial differences in female labor force participation, such as the higher unemployment rate of black women than of white women, as well as the tendency of black women to begin their careers in jobs lower in status, their greater expectations of working, and their tendency to value higher wages above job satisfaction.[18] While these differences should not be underestimated, it is myopic to focus on them exclusively in assessing the black female condition. The observation by Gump and Rivers, based on an extensive review of the literature on black–white differences in labor force participation, is particularly poignant here:

> Much data has been presented portraying the black woman as more likely to enter the labor force, more interested in doing so, more likely to work full time and continuously, and more necessary to the financial welfare of her family. . . . While such facts suggest a woman much less constricted by the traditional role than her white counterpart, it is equally true that black women choose occupations traditional for women, are motivated perhaps more by a sense of responsibility than by achievement need, are much more traditional in their sex-role attitudes than are young white women, and to some extent seem burdened by the responsibility they carry.
>
> Thus it appears that black women have *not* escaped many of the constraints imposed upon white women, though they are free of some of them. . . . There are those who would assert too quickly the freedom of black women, and they must be reminded of her bondage.[19]

If there is much in the objective condition of black women that warrants the development of a black feminist consciousness, why have so many black women failed to recognize the patterns of sexism that directly impinge on their everyday lives? Why have they failed to address a social force that unremittingly thwarts their ability to compete on an equal basis in the society?

Five factors have contributed to this situation. The most formidable is that many black intellectuals and spokespeople have ignored the issue of sexism, largely because it has been viewed as a racially divisive issue. That is, a feminist consciousness has been regarded as a force that could generate internal conflict between black males and black females. It is this writer's firm conviction that far from being a source of internecine conflict, a feminist consciousness would contribute to the welfare of the race in a variety of ways:

1. It would enable black men and women to attain a more accurate and deeper level of understanding of many of the social problems that are currently undermining the viability of the race. Such problems as the black male unemployment rate, the absence of the black male in the family, the large repre-

sentation of black women on welfare, and the high black "illegitimacy" rate are just a few of the many social problems afflicting blacks that are, in part at least, attributable to the operation of sexism in our society.

2. Elimination of sexism on the interpersonal level within black culture would result in each sex developing its individual talents and capacities unhindered by societal definitions of appropriate sexual behavior, thus increasing the general pool of black abilities.
3. A feminist consciousness, in ridding black males and females of their socially conditioned anxieties concerning masculinity and femininity, would foster greater psychological well-being and thereby strengthen the interpersonal bonds that are constantly being eroded and loosened by the impact of interpersonal sexism.

A second factor that helps to explain the absence of feminist consciousness among black women is the ideology of racism. Racism is so ingrained in American culture, and so entrenched among many white women, that black females have been reluctant to admit that anything affecting the white female could also affect them. Indeed, many black women have tended to see all whites, regardless of sex, as sharing the same objective interest, and clearly the behavior of many white women vis-à-vis blacks has helped to validate this reaction.

A third factor is the message that emerged in the black social movement of the sixties. In one sense, this movement worked to the detriment of black women because they were told in many different ways that the liberation of the black man was more important than their own liberation. In fact, they were often given to believe that any attempt on their part to take an equal place with the black man in the movement would contribute to his emasculation.[20]

The idea of black matriarchy, another ideological ploy commonly introduced by academicians and policymakers, is a fourth factor that has suppressed the development of a feminist consciousness among black women. In a nutshell, this view holds that in their conjugal and parental relationships black women are more dominant than black men, and so black and white women relate to their mates in altogether different ways.[21] It is easy to see how this view of black women could be used by some to negate the fact of black female oppression: if the black woman were indeed found to be more dominant than the black man, this could be construed as meaning that she is not dependent on him and thus not in need of liberation. In fact, scholarly exploration of the issue has revealed the idea of black matriarchy to be mythical and has shown that the relationship of black and white women to their mates is fundamentally similar. And even if a black matriarchy did exist, it would be fallacious to infer from this that the black woman is not sexually oppressed, for her subordination is a derivative of both her family-related role and her position in the productive sphere of the economy. Thus, single and married black women are both placed in positions of subservience whenever they seek employment. Both are subjected to the manipulative tactics that are used to keep all female laborers—white and black, married and unmarried—in an unequal economic state.

What the participants in the debate on black matriarchy fail to recognize is the white bias of their viewpoints. Implicit in their arguments is the idea that any matriarchy is unnatural and deviant. To attach such a pejorative label to matriarchy, and to view the patriarchal form as a positive good or an index of normality, is to accept the normative standard of the larger white society. Given the role that the family plays in supporting and perpetuating existing unequal economic arrangements, it may be fitting for us to question whether it would not be in the best interests of blacks to work out familial relationships that deviate from the conventional patriarchal norm and approximate a more egalitarian pattern, thereby challenging the racial and sexual status quo.

A final factor that has inhibited the development of a feminist consciousness among women in American society in general, and black females in particular, has been the church. Biblical support for sexual inequality is as strong today as it ever was, and the Christian church has played a preeminent role in validating the patriarchal nature of western culture.[22] This is as true in black churches as it is in white ones, although the role of black religion in enchaining black women has been little subject to discussion.[23] The persistence of patriarchal views in black churches is undoubtedly due in some measure to the fact that most of our noted black theologians are men. But a more important point is that it persists because of the deep religiosity of black people today and the fact that most black religions are basically Christian despite some deviations and modifications. For whatever reason, it is significant that the church is the most important social institution in the black community and the one in which black women (in contrast to black men) spend most of their time and energy. This dedication undoubtedly has contributed in no small part to the black female's passive acceptance of her subservient societal role. Even so-called black nationalist religions, which proffer a different view of the world and a substitute for the teachings of Christianity, have failed to come to terms with the subordination of black women in our society. Indeed, some have even adopted theological preachments designed to stultify the development of female talents and to push women yet further into the traditional servile roles of mother and wife.[24]

In sum, black women in America have been placed in a dependent position vis-à-vis men. The source of their dependence is dual: It originates in the role they have been socialized to play in the family and the discrimination they face when they seek remunerative employment outside the home. Because sexual dependence works to the detriment of the entire race—both male and female—all blacks, regardless of sex, need to recognize the way in which their behavior, be it familial, marital, occupational, or otherwise, is subject to social control. From this realization they need to develop alternative behavioral norms for themselves and socialization patterns for their offspring that will challenge the distribution of power in America.

The view that racism is the sole cause of black female subordination in America today exhibits a very simplistic view of the black female condition. The economic processes of the society subordinate different groups of workers in different ways, but always for the same end. Because white supremacy and male chauvinism are merely symptoms of the same economic imperatives, it is facile to argue that white pigmentation is the sine qua non for the attainment of power in America, that white women share the same objective interests as white men, and that white women thus have nothing in common with black women. While whiteness may be a contributory condition for the attainment of social privilege, sex and socioeconomic status are contingent conditions. Because color, gender, and wealth are at the present time collective determinants of power and privilege in America, it is almost impossible to disentangle their individual effects. Thus, those who would assert that the elimination of one type of social discrimination should have priority over all others display a naive conceptualization of the nature of power in American society and the multifaceted character of social oppression.

NOTES

1. Examples of literature supporting this perspective are Mae King, "Oppression and Power: The Unique Status of the Black Woman in the American Political System," *Social Science Quarterly*, 56 (1975), 116–28; Linda La Rue, "The Black Movement and Women's Liberation," *Black Scholar*, 1 (May 1970), 36–42; and Julia Mayo, "The New Black Feminism: A Minority Report," in *Contemporary Sexual Behavior: Critical Issues in the 1970's*, Joseph Zubin and John Money, eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 175–86.
2. Notable exceptions are Barbara Sizemore, "Sexism and the Black Male," *Black Scholar*, 4 (Mar.-Apr. 1973), 2–11; Aileen Hernandez, "Small Change for Black Women," *Ms.*, 3 (Aug. 1974), 16–18; Elizabeth Almquist, "Untangling the Effects of Race and Sex: The Disadvantaged Status of Black Women," *Social Science Quarterly*, 56 (1975), 129–42; Charmeyne D. Nelson, "Myths about Black Women Workers in Modern America," *Black Scholar*, 6 (Mar. 1975), 11–15; and William A. Blakey, "Everybody Makes the Revolution: Some Thoughts on Racism and Sexism," *Civil Rights Digest*, 6 (spring 1974), 11–19.
3. Margaret Bentsen, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," *Monthly Review*, 21 (Sept. 1970); Juliet Mitchell, *Women's Estate* (New York: Random House, 1971), 99–158; Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966); Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, R. Reiter, ed. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975); Jean Gardiner, "Women's Domestic Labor," *New Left Review* (Jan.-Feb. 1975), 47–59; and Sheila Rowbotham, *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1974).
4. See, among others, Harold Baron, "The Demand for Black Labor: Historical Notes on the Political Economy of Racism," *Radical America*, 5 (Mar.-Apr. 1971), 1–46.
5. For further discussion of black sex-role socialization see, among others, Diane K. Lewis, "The Black Family: Socialization and Sex Roles," *Phylon*, 34 (fall 1975), 221–37; Carlfred Broderick, "Social Heterosexual Development among Urban Negroes and Whites," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 27 (May 1965), 200–3; Alice R. Gold and M. Carol St. Ange, "Development of Sex-Role Stereotypes in Black and White Elementary Girls," *Developmental Psychology*, 10 (May 1974), 461; and Boone E. Hammond and Joyce Ladner, "Socialization into Sexual Behavior in a Negro Slum Ghetto," in *The Individual, Sex, and Society*, Carlfred B. Broderick and Jesse Bernard, eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), 41–52.
6. See Elizabeth Almquist's article in this volume (pp. 423–53) for more data on this point.
7. Barbara Reagan and Martha Blaxall, "Occupational Segregation in International Women's Year," in *Women and the Workplace*, Martha Blaxall and Barbara Reagan, eds.

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976). The entire volume is devoted to occupational segregation based on sex. See also Elizabeth Koontz, "Women as Minority Group," in *Voices of the New Feminism,* Mary Lou Thompson, ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 77–86.

8. Victor R. Fuchs, "Differences in Hourly Earnings between Men and Women," *Monthly Labor Review,* 94 (May 1971), 9–15; and Elizabeth Waldman and Beverly J. McEaddy, "Where Women Work—an Analysis by Industry and Occupation," *Monthly Labor Review,* 97 (May 1974), 3–13.
9. Edward A. Nicholson and Roger D. Roderick, *Correlates of Job Attitudes among Young Women* (Columbus: Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1973), 10.
10. See Lenore Weitzman's article (pp. 157–237) in this volume.
11. *Employment and Earnings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 1983), 157.
12. Stuart H. Garfinkle, "Occupation of Women and Black Workers, 1962–74," *Monthly Labor Review,* 98 (Nov. 1975), 25–35.
13. Elizabeth Almquist, "Untangling the Effects of Race and Sex"; and Marion Kilson, "Black Women in the Professions, 1890–1970," *Monthly Labor Review,* 100 (May 1977), 38–41.
14. Women are 54.5 percent of all black college graduates. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Educational Attainment of Workers: March 1982,* Special Labor Force Bulletin (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), supplementary tables. Part of the reason for this is that until recently blacks were basically a rural people and it is generally the case for farmer families to withdraw males from schools to work the farm but not females since farming is a male occupation. For further discussion of how this has contributed to present-day disparities in black male and female occupational status see E. Wilbur Bock, "Farmer's Daughter Effect: The Case of the Negro Female Professionals," *Phylon* (Spring 1969), 17–26.
15. Andrew Billingsley, *Black Families in White America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 79–82.
16. Anne McDougall Young, "Labor Force Patterns of Students, Graduates and Drop-Outs: 1981," *Monthly Labor Review* (Sept. 1982), 39–42.
17. Patricia Gurin and Carolyn Gaylord, "Educational and Occupational Goals of Men and Women at Black Colleges," *Monthly Labor Review,* 99 (June 1976), 13–14.
18. Patricia Cayo Sexton, *Women and Work,* Employment and Training Administration, R. & D. Monograph no. 46 (Washington, D.C.: Department of Labor, 1977), 15; and Joyce O. Beckett, "Working Wives: A Racial Comparison," *Social Work,* 21 (Nov. 1976), 463–71.
19. Janice Porter Gump and L. Wendell Rivers, *The Consideration of Race in Efforts to End Sex Bias* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Education 1973), 24–25.
20. Joyce A. Ladner, *Tomorrow's Tomorrow: The Black Woman* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1971), 284; Robert Staples, *The Black Woman in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1975), 174–76; Janice Gump, "Comparative Analysis of Black Women's and White Women's Sex Role Attitudes," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology,* 43 (1975), 862–63; and Cellestine Ware, *Woman Power: The Movement for Women's Liberation* (New York: Tower Publications, 1970), 75–99.
21. S. Parker and R. J. Kleiner, "Social and Psychological Dimensions of Family Role Performance of the Negro Male," *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* 31 (1969), 500–6; John H. Scanzoni, *The Black Family in Modern Society* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971); Kathryn Thomas Dietrich, "A Re-examination of the Myth of Black Matriarchy," *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* 37 (May 1975), 367–74; H. H. Hyman and J. S.

Reed, "Black Matriarchy Reconsidered: Evidence from Secondary Analysis of Sample Surveys," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 33 (1969), 346–54; Robert Staples, "The Myth of the Black Matriarchy," in *The Black Family*, Robert Staples, ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1971), 149–59; and Alan Berger and William Simon, "Black Families and the Moynihan Report: A Research Evaluation," *Social Problems*, 33 (Dec. 1974), 145–61.

22. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974); Susan Bell, *Women, from the Greeks to the French Revolution* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973); and Alan Cuming, "Women in Greek and Pauline Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 34 (Dec. 1973), 517–28.
23. A notable exception is Rosemary Reuther, "Crisis in Sex and Race: Black vs. Feminist Theology," *Christianity and Crisis*, 34 (Apr. 15, 1974), 67–73; and "Continuing the Discussion: A Further Look at Feminist Theology," *Christianity and Crisis*, 34 (June 24, 1974), 139–43.
24. Barbara Sizemore, "Sexism and the Black Male," *Black Scholar*, 4 (Mar.-Apr. 1973), 2–11; and Harry Edwards, "Black Muslim and Negro Christian Family Relationships," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 30 (Nov. 1968), 604–11.

SUSAN E. MARSHALL

Keep us on the pedestal: Women against feminism in twentieth-century America

In recent decades, a growing body of feminist research has delineated the structure, strategy, and political ideology of women's rights movements in the United States (Flexner 1973; Kraditor 1968, 1971; Freeman 1975). We know surprisingly little, however, about the organization of opposition to proposed changes in female status. The astounding success of contemporary antifeminists in halting the momentum of state ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (see Solomon 1978; Boles 1979; Gordon and Hunter 1977–78) underscores the relevance of an empirical reexamination of such countermovements.

This article compares the American antisuffrage movement that flourished between 1910 and 1918 and the contemporary anti-ERA movement spearheaded by Phyllis Schlafly, to suggest a conceptual framework for understanding antifeminist movements in the United States. Much of the popular and scholarly work on American antifeminism has emphasized the powerful resistance of business interests to progress in women's rights for the purpose of maintaining an abundance of cheap female labor (Firestone 1970; Scott and Scott 1975; Carabillo 1978). While the profit motive may explain corporate financial contributions to the antifeminist cause, a large part of the organizing and lobbying activities has been performed by antifeminist females, most of whom are not in the labor force and thus not in a position to directly exploit members of their own sex (Brady and Tedin 1976; Tedin et al. 1977).

This analysis attempts to explain the emergence and growth of female countermovements to feminism through an examination of the rhetorical strategies used to define the movement, establish goals, and attract adherents. A comparison of female antisuffrage and anti-ERA literature suggests that strikingly similar arguments have been utilized to justify the maintenance of traditional gender roles. In particular, the passage of legislation mandating gender equality is per-

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ceived as a threat to the privileged status of homemaker, which excuses women from the responsibilities of financial support, political participation, and military service. In both historical periods, the sacred symbols of family, God, and country are frequently evoked to emphasize the importance of female domestic roles for the perpetuation of American society. Conversely, this potent rhetoric discredits feminists as selfish, unpatriotic, irreligious, antifamily, and both antimale and antifemale. This article explores these common rhetorical themes and analyzes the two female antifeminist movements in terms of status politics (see Gusfield 1963; Lipset 1965).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Although the first formal antisuffrage organization was established in the United States as early as 1872, organized antisuffrage activity remained sporadic and limited in scope until 1910, when suffragist victories began to mount in the form of state constitutional amendments giving women the vote. By 1913, there were sixteen state antisuffrage organizations and a National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage. Many of these groups existed with acknowledged male financial support, but their leadership and membership were overwhelmingly female. Their activities included the distribution of antisuffrage literature, legislative lobbying at state and federal hearings on the suffrage issue, and the publication of official organs (on which this analysis is based). These journals delineated the arguments against woman suffrage, reported the progress of antisuffrage campaigns, rejoiced at suffragists' defeats, and trivialized their victories. By 1918, however, the heyday of the antisuffrage movement had passed, weakened by the success of a suffrage amendment in the key eastern state of New York and the imminent ratification of the Anthony amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which enfranchised 26 million women in 1920.

Similarly, the organization of contemporary antifeminists is in large part a response to the success of the women's movement in gaining state ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Twenty-eight states ratified the ERA in 1972, the first year of eligibility. During that year, a countermovement began to coalesce, dedicated to halting ratification in additional states and rescinding the amendment where it had already been ratified. Reportedly backed by corporate interests, the countermovement nonetheless has a rank and file that is predominantly female. Local and regional groups have appeared, with such attention-getting names as Eve Reborn, HOT DOG (Humanitarians Opposed to Degrading Our Girls), AWARE (American Women Are Richly Endowed), and POW (Protect Our Women), but the most prominent national antifeminist organization is clearly Phyllis Schlafly's STOP-ERA (which publishes its own monthly report). The contemporary antifeminist movement has proved more successful than its predecessor, however. After 1977, no additional states ratified the ERA, several states voted to rescind ratification, and the lapse of the June 30, 1982, deadline found the ERA three states short of the thirty-eight needed to add it to the U.S. Constitution. Although feminist leaders and legislators have reintroduced the ERA in Congress, post-hoc analyses have chided the feminist movement for severely underestimating the popular appeal of the anti-ERA rhetoric (see "What Killed Equal Rights?" 1982).

THE IDEOLOGY OF ANTIFEMINISM

Why would women organize to actively oppose a women's rights movement? A comparative historical analysis of American antisuffrage and anti-ERA literature suggests that the ideology of antifeminism embodies three related arguments: the reaffirmation of divinely ordained sex differences, support for the traditional family as a necessary basis for the continuation of society, and the alignment of antifeminism with unselfish patriotism. The women's rights issue is thus cast as a moral battle over the basic institutions and values of American society.

Nature's Plan: Specialization by Sex

Antifeminist arguments for the maintenance of differential laws by sex rest ultimately on a belief in inherent and hence immutable sex differences. The superior intellectual and physical endowments of men intend them for the public sphere, the world of economics and politics, as the providers and protectors of women and children. Women, by contrast, are guided by sentiment rather than reason and are thus designed for the domestic sphere of childbearing and child rearing, keeping the home, and instilling morality. This specialization of function, it is argued, is ordained by God and nature, as supported by both scientific theories of evolution and religious tenets. Impertinent feminists who wish to tamper with the laws of nature thus threaten the continuation of civilization.

The antisuffragist view of woman's role was a reflection of middle-class values—"to be tender, loving, pure, and inspiring in her home, . . . to raise the moral tone of every household, to refine every man, . . . to mitigate the harshness and cruelty and vulgarity of life everywhere" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1908d, 8). The delicate female nervous system renders woman without "staying qualities, continuity of purpose, or affinity for the rough and tumble warfare in political life" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1910b, 2). Moreover, "woman does not think, she feels, she does not reason, she emotionalizes," and hence a female electorate is likely to "do injury to itself without promoting the public good" (*Woman's Protest* 1915c, 15; 1915e, 19). Because of these inherent limitations, antisuffragists believed that feminists were asking not for equality but for special favors. "Women cannot consistently ask for a place in men's political race and then insist that they be helped over all the hurdles because they are naturally handicapped in the contest by their sex and their mission as mothers" (Heron 1915, 6). Paradoxically, however, antisuffragists repeatedly insist: "We acknowledge no inferiority to men. We claim to have no less ability to perform the duties which God has imposed upon us than they have to perform those imposed upon them" (*Illinois Association* 1909, 3).

Contemporary antifeminists assert similar "fundamental inherent differences between men and women" (Schlafly 1977, 21). Male intellectual and physical superiority and female maternal instinct "must be recognized as part of the plan of the Divine Architect for the survival of the human race through the centuries" (p. 11). By opposing such sex-based roles, the women's movement and the ERA are "opposing Mother Nature herself" (p. 87). Specifically, legal mandates for equal employment opportunity rapidly degenerate into "reverse discrimination," given their blatant disregard for "the inadequacy of female qualifications" (p. 131). Gender-free laws will also remove traditional female protections from physically demanding jobs, thus increasing female injury and unemployment, and women's athletic opportunities will be virtually eliminated if they have to compete with men because of legal challenges to sex-segregated sports programs. While insisting that attempts to eradicate inherent sex differences cannot succeed, antifeminists also predict that experiments that undermine the traditional sex-based division of labor will "further confuse a generation already unsure about its identity," ominously conjuring up the specter of rampant homosexuality (p. 22).

In both countermovements, antifeminists portray themselves as women who accept these sex differences and embrace their femaleness. Antisuffragists are "women who are proud of their womanhood and their relationship to men" (*Woman's Protest* 1915a, 3). They are the true ladies, the "patient, self-sacrificing women" who carry on their work "quietly and unostentatiously," with "grace of manner, dignity of bearing, purity of spirit, and nobility of conduct" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1908b, 5; Sebring 1915, 11; George 1915, 5). These qualities are also cited in contemporary antifeminist literature, such as Andelin's *Fascinating Womanhood* (1966) and Morgan's *Total Woman* (1973). For Schlafly, these qualities are embodied in the "Positive Woman," who "understands that men and women are different, and that these differences provide the key to her success as a person, and fulfillment as a woman" (Schlafly 1977, 9).

In sharp contrast, feminists are characterized as malcontents, women who have failed at being women and are trying, somewhat childishly, to spoil the happiness of others of their sex. In the early decades of this century, suffragists were variously called "Amazons," "mannish," "unwomanly," "vulgar," and "viragoes"; in short, they were a disgrace to "Fair Womanhood" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1909a, 3; 1912a:2; 1912b, 7; White 1915b, 9; *Woman's Protest* 1915e, 19). According to Schlafly, feminists are "disgruntled," "whining," "straggly-haired" women who downgrade their sex and ultimately reject it, as evidenced by their campaign to adopt male prerogatives and jobs (Schlafly 1977, 34, 35, 37). Paradoxically, the sexual stereotypes of dependence and emotionality embraced by antifeminists are the very ones used to further discredit their adversaries. Feminists are "hysterical"; they are "howling dervishes" who "cry copiously" about supposed injustices and seek "silly" corrective measures such as the elimination of sexist words from laws and textbooks (*Anti-Suffragist* 1909c, 5; *Woman's Protest* 1915b, 7; Schlafly 1977, 28, 45). The use of the diminutive term *suffragette* is a notable example of the derogatory application of feminine stereotypes.

The Cult of Domesticity

To antifeminists, immutable sex differences dictate a traditional family structure, in which male breadwinners support female homemakers. Patriarchal marriage is the ultimate goal for the normal woman. "Marriage and motherhood give a woman new identity and the opportunity for all-round fulfillment as a woman"

(Schlafly 1977, 56), and "if she does not think and plan to this end herself someone does it for her" (Bannister 1910, 6). If domestic and career roles are compared, it can be seen that motherhood offers the satisfaction of achievement at an early age while marriage provides a boss (the husband) who is more tolerable than a foreman, supervisor, or office manager (Schlafly 1977, 57, 60). Feminist demands are perceived as a threat to this fundamental social order. Increased female participation in the economic and political spheres causes women to neglect their domestic responsibilities and erodes patriarchal power, which "will tend to the disintegration of the home and the hurt of the nation and the race" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1909b, 2).

Antisuffragists claimed that the female vote was unnecessary and redundant, for male family heads adequately represented the wishes of their wives. Moreover, women had considerable political influence through their charity work and especially through motherhood. "Raise good and able men and in one generation the world will be governed by good and able men," counsels one antisuffragist (Arnold 1915, 14). If women adequately perform their domestic duties, there is no time for active political participation. It is thereby implied that good wives and mothers are disinterested in the vote. Conversely, voting females neglect their family responsibilities, producing ill-mannered or delinquent children and exacerbating antagonism between the sexes to the point of marital dissolution. Political activity also strains the delicate female reproductive organs, "making [women] childless or mothers of a weak-kneed race" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1911, 7). This, of course, is the greatest threat to the continuance of society.

Contemporary antifeminists contend that the equal employment opportunity platform of the women's liberation movement "deliberately degrades the homemaker" (Schlafly 1977, 86). Equality of treatment under the ERA "would wipe out the most basic and precious legal right that homemakers now enjoy: the right to be a full-time homemaker" (p. 98). The ERA is labeled "an elitist upper-middle class cause" (p. 149), perpetrated by selfish professionals who "betray" other women for a "brief high" or "fix" of political power (Schlafly 1973, 12). Their destructive antifamily activities harm both sexes. The eradication of sex-discriminatory employment practices eliminates protection for females from overtime work, making it more difficult for women to perform their domestic duties. In addition, feminist pressure for "reverse discrimination . . . means that employers are being forced to hire and train inexperienced single women with no dependents in order to achieve some arbitrary quota . . . rather than a more qualified man with dependents" (Schlafly 1977, 118). This unjust displacement of married males presumably forces more wives out of the home and into the labor force. Women's liberation thus represents a concerted attack on the family, on female homemakers, and on male providers.

In both historical periods, feminists are cast as the antithesis of the generous, self-sacrificing maternal figure. They are possessed of "intense egotism" and driven by "personal indulgence," promoting a "do your own thing" attitude that "is eroding the fabric of our families" and inculcating dangerous, individualistic values in our children (Armstrong 1915, 3; Brazzil 1915, 18; Schlafly 1977, 77). Feminists are "marital misfits" whose refusal to have babies is responsible "for the apparent disintegration of the institution of marriage" (Schlafly 1977, 65, 212). At the extreme, suffragists were portrayed as advocates of un-Christian and un-American life-styles, supporting activities such as free love and communal child rearing (*Anti-Suffragist* 1909d, 8; *Illinois Association* 1911, 1). Schlafly similarly charges that feminist support of abortion on demand represents an ominous revitalization of Hitler's genocidal policies (1977, 11) and that "lesbianism is logically the highest form in the ritual of women's liberation" (p. 208). "NOW [the National Organization for Women] is for prolesbian legislation giving perverts the same legal rights as husbands and wives—such as the rights to get marriage licenses, to file joint income tax returns, and to adopt children" (p. 228).

Pro Patria

The explicit intentions of suffragists and ERA advocates to alter U.S. laws for the attainment of gender equality enables antifeminists to monopolize the sacred symbols of God, family, and country in defense of the status quo. The two countermovements adopt the role of patriot and portray feminists as radical socialists who would overthrow the government in their single-minded desire to press their minority views on an unwilling electorate. Paradoxically, while condemning feminists for their "enshrinement of individuality," antifeminists explain their own rejection of constitutional amendments as the patriotic defense of individual and state rights from the imposition of federal mandate (Schlafly 1977, 77). During both eras, feminists are charged with duplicity for demanding equal rights when they are unable or unwilling to shoulder equal responsibilities of citizenship.

Antisuffragists were quite insistent that the female vote would cause the downfall of democracy. The cult of domesticity does not prepare women for the job of running the country. With little knowledge of finance, protected by their husbands from taxpaying responsibilities, enfranchised women would presumably support expensive referenda and ultimately bankrupt the government (Tucker 1911, 6; White 1915a, 9). The greater emotionality of females would prompt them to cast impulsive votes for candidates and issues. "National obligations would be piled up under some outburst of pity. . . . International alliances and menaces would be 'happy thoughts' of some moment of great excitement. And without intending it or providing against it, the nation would be plunged into war" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1908c, 8). Not only would this be unjust to males, who are singularly burdened with the duties of military service, but it would also threaten democratic rule. "To extend suffrage to women would be to introduce into the electorate a vast noncombatant party incapable of enforcing its own rule. . . . To make possible a majority which a minority could safely defy would be to overthrow the idea of Republican Government" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1908a, 3). During this wave of feminism, however, neither suffragists nor their adversaries debated the issue of female participation in warfare. Both sides expected women to support the war effort from the sidelines via voluntary relief work and temporary employment in defense industries.

The contemporary feminist movement has recast the issue of female military duty. The exclusion of women from combat positions is viewed as an example of sex discrimination in employment. The ERA would make women subject to a draft and to equal participation in warfare. The countermovement claims that this issue demonstrates the hypocrisy of feminists. "They will exercise *their* freedom of choice to avoid military service"—through legal loopholes such as age restrictions, conscientious objector status, etc.—"but they are willing to inflict involuntary military duty on all other eighteen-year-old girls" (Schlafly 1977, 124). In contrast, antifeminists are true patriots. "It is the task of the Positive Woman to keep America Good"—that is, in accordance with the principles of "Judeo-Christian civilization" (pp. 213, 219). This includes support for capitalist free enterprise and freedom from excessive government intervention. Schlafly supports local control of educational facilities that honor the traditional family; the right of employers to prefer, among equal job candidates, wage earners with dependents; the right to life of all innocent persons from conception to natural death; and the right of society to protect itself by designating different roles for males and females in the military, police, and fire protection services. The ERA is thus viewed as a "federal grab for power," an undemocratic erosion of the rights of individual citizens and states (p. 166).

The antithesis of God-fearing, democratic society is socialism, and feminists are frequently portrayed as seditious radicals who "agitate and demonstrate and hurl demands at society" (Schlafly 1977, 10). Antisuffragists made much of the political alliance between women's suffrage organizations and the Progressive and Socialist parties, as well as the feminist establishment of a Woman's Peace Party during World War I *(Illinois Association* 1913; Conroy 1915; *Woman's Protest* 1915f; Repplier 1915). The continuation of militant suffragist activity during the war years was further evidence of the tendency of feminists to place self above country, in contrast to the patriotic contributions of antisuffrage organizations to the war effort (*Woman's Protest* 1915d). During both eras, feminist attacks on the traditional partriarchal institutions of marriage, work, and politics were perceived as evidence of "the rabid determination of militant radicals" to "evade" their domestic responsibilities at the expense of increased goverment "spending and control" (Schlafly 1977, 27, 204, 206). For antifeminists, socialism represents the greatest danger to women. Its emphasis on equality ignores inherent sex differences and makes the individual rather than the family the fundamental unit of society, thus reducing not only male power but also male responsibility for female dependents.

ANTIFEMINISM AS STATUS POLITICS

The antisuffragist and anti-ERA literature illustrates how countermovements to feminism frequently embrace masculine and feminine stereotypes to legitimate the preservation of sex-discriminatory legislation. Females should not vote because they do not have the emotional, cognitive, or physical abilities necessary for active political participation, and they cannot compel obedience to their mandate via military force. The ERA should not be passed because it legalizes "reverse discrimination," the displacement of male workers by less qualified females. In both periods, female advocates of gender equality are derided for their lack of competence in the male sphere as well as their loss of femininity.

However, the antifeminist belief in a rigid sexual division of labor admits no inequality with males. Females are uniquely suited for their domestic duties of home maintenance and child care, and conversely the domination of the public sphere by males is justified by their inherently superior aggressive, analytical, and logical abilities. This ideology of "separate but equal" means that feminists who complain of gender inequality in American society are guilty of derogating their own sex. Antifeminist rhetoric thus adeptly reverses the images of women's liberation and antifeminism. The former now represents dog-in-the-manger negativism, while the latter promises hope and fulfillment.

Both countermovements carry this argument one step further. Females not only have attained equality with males but also enjoy special privileges, which are threatened by feminist pressures to integrate traditional male and female roles. These asymmetrical rights and responsibilities are derived directly from the gender-based division of labor. As breadwinners, males are required to support their families and must pay their wives alimony in the event of divorce. As the stronger and more aggressive sex, males must also go to war. The physical inferiority of females thus works to their advantage, for women are spared the drudgeries and responsibilities of the male role. The insulation of females within the home preserves their special feminine qualities of gentleness, purity, and morality. It keeps them on the pedestal, above the harshness and vulgarity of the masculine public domain.

American antifeminist movements can thus be explained with reference to Gusfield's (1963) concept of status politics. Countermovements to feminism represent a defense of the dominant status of homemaker, which is perceived as threatened by demands to tear down the rigid separation of male and female spheres. Thus, antisuffragists warn that, "if women claim equality, they must lose their privileges" (*Anti-Suffragist* 1910a, 8). Schlafly's STOP-ERA organization is reportedly an acronym for "Stop Taking Our Privileges" (Solomon 1978, 49), and Schlafly has labeled the ERA the "Extra Responsibilities Amendment" (Schlafly 1977, 104). The Nineteenth Amendment and the ERA thus become symbolic battlegrounds for the issue of which female life-styles will dominate American society. It is not surprising, therefore, that the rhetoric of antifeminism is so saturated with the sacred myths of God, family, and country. As Gusfield observed, the language of status politics is the language of moral issues. At stake is the "symbolic conferral of respect upon the norms of the victor and disrespect upon the norms of the vanquished" (1963, 174). The antifeminist movement is thus an attempt of one group to publicly legitimate its concept of woman's proper place in the social order.

Despite the rhetorical similarities of the two antifeminist movements, significant social changes during this century have given each movement a distinct historical context, manifested by the differences in membership of the groups. In 1910, the status defense of the homemaker was led by wealthy, elite women, the wives of eminent eastern politicians and industrialists, such as Mrs. Elihu Root, Mrs. Schuyler Van Renssalaer, and Mrs. Lowell Putnam. The founder and first president of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, Mrs. Arthur M. Dodge, traced her American ancestry to the first colonists, and her husband was reported at the time to be New York's wealthiest merchant. Newspaper accounts of mass antisuffrage fund-raisers described the assemblage as "prosperous-looking" and reported large donations in response to requests from the dais to "forgo theatre or opera tickets" for the defeat of suffrage ("Suffragists" 1914, 20; "Mormons" 1915, 5). Antisuffrage publications made frequent reference to the social imperative for the "redemptive influence of a lady" to "displace vulgarity with refinement, bad taste with propriety," and "bad manners with fine breeding" during these trying times of social upheaval (Sebring 1915, 11). Not surprisingly, corporate contributors to the antisuffrage cause reportedly included liquor, railroad, and oil interests, and northern legislators who led the fight against suffrage in the U.S. Senate were also well-known spokesmen for the interests of big business (Flexner 1973, 297–305).

The status conflict that spawned the antisuffrage movement may be better understood within a broader class context as an attempt to preserve the cultural hegemony of the eastern industrial elite from the onslaughts of uneducated foreign immigrants and western pioneers. A common argument used against suffrage by these organizations, for example, was the deleterious consequence of expanding the political power of the foreign-born by granting the vote to immigrant women (Scott 1909, 1; *Woman's Protest* 1915g, 7). It is interesting to note that antisuffrage leader Dodge founded the National Federation of Day Nurseries for the dual purpose of alleviating the burdens of the working woman while achieving the broader social goal of inculcating American middle-class values in immigrant children. Moreover, the parallel growth of support for woman suffrage and political reform in the western states was defensively denounced as irrelevant to the east, which contained, after all, the bulk of the American population and its moral center. While racist and classist rhetoric was not exclusive to one side of the suffrage issue (see Kraditor 1971, chaps. 6–7), the antisuffragists went further in their efforts to define motherhood and female domesticity as the solution to the political and cultural threat facing native-born Americans. Furthermore, although the predominantly middle-class suffrage movement also received its share of support from wealthy eastern socialites, the suffragists made greater efforts to reach working-class women. They courted prominent union leaders, spoke in immigrant neighborhoods, passed resolutions in support of women workers, and held public rallies to support female strikers and to protest poor working conditions in the wake of disasters, such as the Triangle Fire of 1911, which killed 146 women garment workers in New York City (see Gompers 1920; Schaffer 1962). While one might argue that the suffragists' motives were primarily instrumental, the suffragists were noticeably more likely to target appeals to employed women of the lower classes than were the an*ti*suffragists.

In the contemporary era, antifeminism appears to receive its greatest support from a different segment of society. Surveys have generally found that female anti-ERA activists are more likely to come from lower-class backgrounds and to have lower levels of educational attainment than members of the pro-ERA movement; they are also less likely to have spouses with professional occupations (Carden 1974; Tedin et al. 1977; Arrington and Kyle 1978). Female antifeminist activists are also less likely to be employed and, when employed, are less likely t be found in professional occupations than pro-ERA activists (Mueller and Dimieri 1982). Other surveys assessing the correlates of women's attitudes about the ERA have similarly found that ERA opponents tend to be less educated (Huber, Rexroat, and Spitze 1978) and are less likely to be employed (Scott 1982) than those favoring the proposed amendment.

While the evidence is inconclusive, due to the small number of empirical studies, it does suggest that contemporary antifeminism is more likely to receive support among lower-class, nonemployed women. Perhaps the attraction of this ideology lies in its defense of the traditional middle-class family with male as provider and female as homemaker, long a symbol of upward mobility in the United States. Seen in this light, the movement's charges that affirmative action programs threaten the male breadwinner role and force wives into the labor force to support families contain a powerful class appeal. Anti-ERA rhetoric portrays feminists as "smooth-talking college women who have never seen a factory production line" and are thus far removed from and little concerned with the economic problems of working-class women (Schlafly 1977, 148, 145). Significantly, Phyllis Schlafly herself came from a modest family background, grew up during the Depression, worked her way through college, and achieved upward mobility through marriage to a successful attorney (Felsenthal 1981).

These divergent historical circumstances of the status politics of antifeminism point to tentative explanations for the failure of the antisuffragists to halt ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in one era and the success of the anti-ERA movement fifty years later. During the second decade of this century, the status conflict favored the rising middle classes, as other popular reform movements—such as temperance, labor rights, and progressivism—joined with suffrage in chipping away at the hegemony of the eastern industrial elite. In addition, political support for the suffrage amendment increased after 1918, in recognition of women's contribution to the war effort and the embarrassing absence of female political rights in the aftermath of President Wilson's pledge to make the world safe for democracy. Suffragist leaders highlighted these incongruities in the media. They also demonstrated considerable political expertise when, after two decades of campaigns for the passage of state woman suffrage referenda, during which time an effective network of state organizations was developed, they followed up with a coordinated national effort single-mindedly focusing on the issue of the vote. (It has been suggested, however, that this single-issue strategy ultimately impeded expansion of the movement to other feminist concerns after suffrage was secured.)

By contrast, the success of the contemporary stop-ERA movement may be partly traced to the economic problems of the 1970s, which engendered a backlash against affirmative action programs designed to promote employment opportunities for women and minorities. Given the membership composition of the anti-ERA movement, it is likely that what is perceived as threatening to the male breadwinner role may concomitantly be seen as endangering the position of the female as homemaker as well as the family's middle-class status. One survey, for example, found that both sexes were more likely to oppose the Equal Rights Amendment if they believed that its passage would make it harder for males to find good jobs, and the authors predicted that a stagnating economy would have deleterious effects on ratification (Huber, Rexroat, and Spitze 1978). This is indeed what happened. According to national opinion surveys, public support for the ERA generally declined throughout the 1970s, although a majority of Americans continued to support it (Daniels, Darcy, and Westphal 1982). Interestingly, 1980 marked the nadir of ERA support, the same year that the Republican party withdrew its long-standing support of the amendment at its national convention and nonetheless swept the presidential elections later that year. In the rising conservative political tide, antifeminist leaders such as Schlafly wasted no time in integrating the anti-ERA movement with other powerful New Right political movements, such as the Moral Majority. Feminists, on the other hand, may inadvertently have weakened support for the ERA by addressing a broad spectrum of issues, including the right to abortion, during the ratification struggle. The stop-ERA movement adeptly seized the opportunity to recruit new members through local churches and antiabortion groups (Brady and Tedin 1976; Mueller and Dimieri 1982). Postmortems conducted in the wake of the June 1982 ratification deadline identified other strategic errors by the pro-ERA movement—most notably, the failure to develop cohesive state organizations until the opposition had already mobilized, redefined the amendment, and scored some impressive state legislature defeats of the ERA. The proponents had lost momentum as early as 1974, and they "were essentially fighting a rearguard action" (Boles 1982, 576). By the time the National Organization for Women (NOW) finally took charge of a focused national ratification campaign in the latter 1970s, it may have already been too late for the ERA.

In recent years, the feminist movement has reacted to these anti-ERA successes by directing more attention to the problems of homemakers, emphasizing freedom of choice for alternative female life-styles (including marriage and motherhood), and attempting to downplay its elitist image. In addition, NOW has established its own network of political action organizations to work more effectively for state-by-state ratification of the ERA during the next campaign. Although the efficacy of their strategy has yet to be tested, these policy shifts strikingly illustrate the mutual influences of social movements and countermovements.

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Jo Freeman is the author of **The Politics of Women's Liberation** (winner of a 1975 American Political Science Association prize as the Best Scholarly Work on Women and Politics) and the editor of **Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies** (1983). She has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago (1973) and a J.D. from New York University School of Law (1982). Her articles on feminism, social movements, law, public policy, sex-role socialization, organizational theory, education, and party politics have been published in *The Nation*, *Ms.*, *Valparaiso Law Review*, *Trans-action*, *School Review*, *Liberal Education*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Intellect*, *Political Science Quarterly*, *Acta Sociologica*, *Prospects*, and numerous anthologies.

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